

6 Free Traffic Strategies

TRAFFIC IS KING

Nothing Happens Online Without Traffic!

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The Importance of Good Traffic

Nothing happens online without good targeted traffic.

That sentence is the basis to everything that has to do with the internet, and that of course includes your web site and everything you do online. Before we get into the free traffic methods in this book, you need to really understand that, not just that traffic is everything, but that targeted traffic is the most important thing online.

But what is targeted traffic? It's traffic which has already shown an interest in the topic that your site is about. So if your site is about dog training, then you should target people who have an interest in dogs, who own a dog, or who might looking to get a dog. This also means that you should not target just anyone and everyone simply because they might have found a picture of a puppy to be cute.

You need to remember that whatever you do online to drive traffic to your web site (or your affiliate link) needs to be targeted traffic in order to get the best results. Do not be fooled by those "get a million hits to your site" services thinking that you have found the golden egg. The reality is that you will be very lucky to see any sales come out of traffic like that.

Let me show you a quick example. What would you rather have, 10,000 untargeted visitors to your site of whom only 20 people convert into a sale or lead, or 1,000 targeted visitors of whom 100 converted? I would much rather good targeted traffic over general untargeted traffic any day!

Yes, you will get less traffic overall to your site, but more of the targeted traffic will convert into a sale or lead, depending on what your objective is on your site.

That's the other important thing you need to decide upon now, what is the objective of your web site? What do you want your visitors to do when they get to your site?

I see many web sites all the time where there are 101 things I can do and click on, which generally results in doing nothing. Busy sites with a lot of links, banners, or ads can be too confusing to visitors. They are not sure what they are supposed to do with too many options for them to choose from. Your site should be simple and to the point with only a few different things that visitors can do.

Along the same lines as having an objective, you also need to know what type of targeted traffic you need. Who is your target audience and who is your site made for? Without actually asking these questions you will not be able to properly target the traffic by creating the best ad or by writing the best article to attract the proper visitor.

So before you start implementing these traffic strategies, first make sure to know who your audience is, what you want them to do on your site, and understand that targeted traffic is the only type of traffic that matters.

Track it or Lose It

Aside from attracting the proper audience for your web site, you also need to track your traffic to get the best conversion rate that you can. By now you also need to know exactly what you want your traffic to do when they get to your site, whether it's to buy a specific product, call you for an appointment, or sign up to an email list. When you know that, you can set up your tracking codes.

This book is all about free traffic methods, so some people may not be as concerned about testing and tracking conversions since no money is being paid, but you still need to do this.

I know for myself that even with free traffic, I would want to know if by making a small change on my site I could reach 6% conversions and not just 5%. You might not be spending money for traffic, but you will be spending time, so it's still important to track.

There are many things on your site that you can track, and a few things off your site as well.

On site tracking;

- Your headline
- Bullet points
- Pictures/graphics
- Opt-in box placement
- Amount/length of content
- Length of time on your site
- The percentage of who took your desired action
- And just about everything else from the background color, size of the font, and even your domain name.

Off site tracking;

- What site the visitors came from
- What site they are going to (clicking off of your site)
- What ads are performing the best on other sites

As you can see, there is a lot that can be tracked, but don't let that stop you from setting it up. Once it's set up and working, you don't have to really do much else except for changing small things on your site to see which change performs better.

Testing and tracking is all about finding what your visitors like the most and what makes them take your desired action the most.

For example, many online marketers are building their email lists by offering a free gift in exchange for the visitor entering their name and email address in an opt-in box. In this case the desired action that the marketer wants the visitor to take would be to join their email list.

Many times marketers would create fancy looking landing pages with nice graphics, some good copywriting to explain about the free gift, and maybe even a video. If you saw one of these pages you would probably think that it would get some nice conversion rates in the amount of visitors to join their list.

However, some marketers have found that this type of landing page is actually not the best way to go in terms of what converts better. Many marketers are now using very simple landing pages where there is very little written content and almost no fancy graphics, with just a short headline and an opt-in box.

How do you think they figured this out when the "obvious" best page was not actually the best page after all? The tracked everything!

They knew where the traffic was coming from, they knew how many reached the landing page, and they knew how many converted into a lead by joining their list. They set up the proper tracking and over time they were able to see what was working best and what wasn't.

Note: I am not saying that you should go out and change your pages to be all simple styles. It is also important to say that not everything works the same for all lists/marketers. What works for some does not work for others, even though on the surface things may seem the same.

To start you can use simple web site "counter" tracking, as many of them these days provide a lot of the needed tracking information.

Try [Google Analytics](#) or [StatCounter](#).

Instant Free Social Traffic

Let's start off with one of the fastest ways you can drive free targeted traffic to your web site. Using the social networking sites including forums can bring you a lot of traffic quite quickly if you have already built up a following.

I say that this method is quick, and it is, but only if you have already been in the forums and using social sites like Twitter and Facebook. Otherwise it might take some time to set up if you have to start gaining followers and friends from scratch.

However, once you are set up all you have to do is post a message about your new product or service (without coming across as spamming) and you will see instant traffic to your site. If you built up a following of targeted friends, then this traffic should convert pretty well on a free offer.

Forum traffic:

The first thing you need to do is find an active forum that is about the same topic as your site. So if your site is about gardening with maybe an opt-in form to join your gardening email list, then find a forum that has something to do with that topic.

You need to make sure that the forum is active and alive with real members posting everyday or at least several times a week. Avoid forums which don't have many newer posts or which are being filled with spam postings.

If you are already a member of this forum than you should already know the rules, but if not you need to learn what the rules are when it comes to advertising and using links in your forum signature.

Before posting any kind of ads you should become a valuable part of the forum community, offering advice and help to other members. You want to come across as someone trustworthy (which I assume you are) and knowledgeable about the topic. For starters simply place a link in your signature to your web site, without any strong advertisement writing, maybe just asking them to check out your site.

Over time as people begin to like you and follow you, you will start seeing more and more traffic coming to your site from the forum.

Social network traffic:

Using Twitter and Facebook is similar to forums because everyone gets to know each other based on what they post about, and not just some random ad they saw on a site somewhere. So because of this you need to use the same principles as you did in the forum, you need to gain trust and become seen as an expert in your field.

You will want to start building up your Twitter followers and Facebook friends by posting relevant and interesting topics, all based around your niche topic. To speed things up a bit you can also start following the experts in your field and the people that are following them. Doing so will alert those people that you have started to follow them and in return many of them will start following you. This is a great way to get new followers, but just make sure to keep posting information on your niche topic.

There are many software tools out there that will go out and automatically start adding new followers to your account for you. Some people have had good success with this, while others haven't. It's up to you to try out if you want. Most of the time the followers will be untargeted random people, but for general niche topics these types of followers might convert ok.

Social traffic can become one of the best traffic sources for your site over time. The more that people trust you and see you as an expert, the more likely they are to tell others about you and purchase your products.

Although social traffic might not be the quickest from the very start of it, over time it can bring a lot of traffic in short periods of time, and overall your good reputation can last a long time to come.

Long-Term Free Article Traffic

Article marketing can be a fantastic way to drive long-term free traffic to your web sites, but only if you do it correctly. There has been so much talk on the internet marketing forums about article marketing and what's working and what isn't, but like anything online, you need to test it out for yourself and the niche you are in.

The one main issue with getting traffic from articles is that it can take a while before you start seeing any, and so many people give up too early because of that. The real power of article marketing comes not in the short term, but over months and years. Yes, you can still be getting free traffic from articles you submitted two years ago!

The point to article marketing is for your article to be ranked high in the search engines for your chosen keywords, but to also be used by other web site owners on their sites, so that your author bio link pointing to your site will be clicked. Not only can you get free traffic from the search engines, but also from sites which you have no idea even exist.

So the first thing you need to do is know what niche your web site is in and find keywords to write your articles around. These keywords should not be major competitive keywords which have all kinds of big and powerful sites already ranking in the search engines. You need to find smaller keywords that get anywhere from 30-100 visits a day (for being on the #1 spot in the search engines), you can even go with lower numbers if you want.

You might not get a lot of traffic for each article, but over time with many articles on the same topic using different keywords, you can start seeing a lot of free traffic. Article marketing is all about having a lot of articles out there, all pulling in a bit of traffic, and hopefully that traffic will click on your link in the author resource box to visit your site.

Once you have found a good keyword to use, you will then need to write the article. You will have to keep in mind the rules and terms of the article directories to which you will be submitting this article to. All article directories are different, some allow affiliate links, some don't, and some need the article to be of a certain length. So before you start writing, research the different directories that you will be using to learn about what they accept and don't accept.

In general the article should be 350-500 words long and contain useful information, and not just a sales pitch. The more quality information you provide in the article, the greater chance the reader will click through to visit your site.

Although you don't want to sell to the reader in the article, you do want to gently guide them to click on your link. The whole point is to get traffic to your site, so write it in a way that will get readers to want to click your link.

Besides the content of the article, there are two other very important aspects to the article. One being the title of it and the other is the author's bio (resource) box which is usually located at the end of the article.

The title is important because that's what will get people to click to read your article in the first place. Without a title that draws people in, there is no point to the article. One thing to keep in mind with your title is to try to include your keyword in it. This may be hard to do sometimes depending on the keyword, but you can see a lot better search engine rankings with your keyword in the title.

The author's bio box is also very important because that is what will ultimately get the reader to click your link. Over the years marketers have begun to learn that the standard bio box that reads something like "This article was written by John Doe who is a professional real estate agent in the New York area", no longer works that well. You need to give the reader a good reason to want to visit your site, and a sentence like the example doesn't do that. Try telling them that if they visit your site they can get a free gift, or they can learn the 7 proven secrets to selling real estate in New York.

After you have written the article, given it a good title and a resource box, now it's time to submit it to the article directories. Each article directory is different, but they all act the same way in that they accept free articles from people like you who want to drive traffic to their site, and in exchange their directory site grows larger and more popular.

There are hundreds if not thousands of article directories, some of which target specific niche topics, so search through Google to find the ones which are adding new articles every day.

Once you have signed up to the directories, all you basically have to do now is copy and paste your article into their site. You might have to fill in some extra information like keywords, topic, and author information, but that shouldn't take too long to do. Some directories manually approve articles and some don't, so it may take a few days before

your article shows up. But once it does you can repeat the process and continue to write and submit more articles.

Free Traffic from Your Blog

Along the same line as article marketing, blogging is also a more long-term free traffic method, but with the ability to see some quick traffic as well, but most will come over time. The reason for this is because after a few months of writing and posting on your blog, your site will start gaining some good search engine placement. But if you post on topics which are hot right now or that might be interesting to readers, then your site could receive a lot of viral traffic.

With that said, there are two types of blog posts which you can write about. One being keyword specific posts like you do when writing articles, but the second type is the interesting or “how to” type of blog posts.

Without going into detail again about keywords, simply follow what was said in the article marketing chapter. But when it comes to general interest or “how to” topics of blog posts, it’s important to write about a topic which many of your readers would want to learn about. In order to get the most traffic coming to your blog, you should focus on hot topics which are not too niche specific. Of course you want to keep on the same topic as your blog, but don’t narrow it down too much or else you might lose some readers.

Over time as your blog becomes more popular you can write about different smaller niche topics, but to start I would suggest sticking to the overall niche topic.

Writing your blog posts though is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to your blog as a whole. There are many different factors that can help you drive even more free traffic to and from your blog. One important thing to decide is whether your blog is where you want your traffic to go to, or is it that you want your blog itself to drive traffic to another site of yours, maybe an affiliate link. When you make sure to know which way you want to go, you can then properly set up your blog.

If you want your blog to be the main place for traffic to end up at, then here are a few tips to follow.

- Write interesting posts which will keep the visitor on your blog for longer periods of time. Use hot topics and good blog titles to draw them in.
- Place ads on the sidebar of your blog to help monetize it, using either Google AdSense ads, ClickBank banners, or a combination of both.

- Set up an autoresponder form with a free gift to encourage visitors to join your list so that you can email them later on with offers or send them back to your blog.
- Write product review posts and honestly review products in your niche. If you don't like a product, don't be afraid to say so in your review.

If you are using your blog as a gateway to send traffic to another page, maybe an affiliate offer, then here are some tips for that.

- Write interesting posts using good blog titles, but don't give away all of your information. Guide your readers to your other site or affiliate link to learn more about the topic.
- Don't have too many ads for different products on your blog. If your main goal is to send traffic to an affiliate offer, then too many other ads for different products will only confused your visitors.
- You can still use an autoresponder, just set it up to promote that product instead of using it as a general list newsletter.

It doesn't matter which way you want to use your blog, you still need to get traffic to it in the first place. So don't ignore social marketing and using forums like listed in a previous chapter.

Speaking of social marketing/networking, there are some great tools to add to your blog. I am sure you have seen those little icons on blogs which ask you to share the blog post, or to post it to your Twitter or Facebook account. Be sure to set up your blog with those add-ons because they can help you grow your blog virally.

Blogging is a great way to get free traffic, but just be sure to keep posting relevant and interesting posts to keep your readers coming back for more. The more you post, the more the search engines will like you, and the more traffic you will get.

The Power of SEO

This strategy can and should be used in almost everything you do online because over time this can be the best thing for your online business. Good search engine optimization (SEO) on and off of your site bring you the most free traffic over any other traffic method.

The point to SEO is to get your site/blog ranked high up in the search engines, ultimately being on page #1 of the search engine results page and being in the top #1 spot of that page. In almost any niche there are businesses paying the search engines to have their ad shown on the first page, but if you can be there without paying... that's gold, especially for highly competitive keywords!

So like in the article marketing chapter, you want to find highly searched-for keywords with low competition. Finding these keywords is becoming harder and harder to do over the years, as more and more site owners are trying to do the exact same thing. The key is to find many smaller keywords that overall can bring you a lot of traffic.

So after you have found your keywords it's time for the real "work" to begin. SEO isn't really that hard to do or to understand, but it takes time, and this is where most people get stuck. Proper SEO tactics take months if not years to do, and it really is never a job that ends, it's something that has to be continually managed (mostly for the higher competitive keywords).

There are some smaller niche keywords which you can probably rank for quite easily, maybe in just a few days, but the majority of medium competition keywords it will take a month or two to start seeing results.

So what is it that you have to actually do? There are two types of search engine optimization tactics, onsite and offsite SEO.

Onsite SEO tactics include;

- Using your keywords in the title of your page or blog post.
- Placing your keywords throughout the content of your site.
- Using other related keywords on your pages.
- Use enough written content for the search engines to read.
- Regularly updated content (new blog posts).

- Linking off to other related topic web sites.

Offsite SEO tactics include;

- More backlinks (will be discussed more in depth below).
- Use of keywords as the linked text back to your site (anchor text).

Backlinks are probably the most important thing you can do offsite to help improve your search rankings. The more the better. But more links from authority sites is what you really should be looking for.

Keep getting new and good backlinks over time pointing back to your web site or affiliate links.

Here are a few tips about backlinks;

- Get links back from authority sites Google likes and ranks high in the search engines. Often these are sites with high PageRank (PR).
- Don't go out spamming blogs or sites just to get a backlink. If you get hundreds or thousands of new backlinks in the short period of time, Google may decide to delete your rankings.
- If possible, try to get links back from sites which are on the same topic as your site.

The search engines want web sites to be ranked in the search engines that really belong there and are truly helpful to visitors. So try to do all of your SEO work with that in mind, are you trying to just "play" the SEO game or is your site getting natural backlinks from people who simply like your site?

SEO is a game that does have to be played to succeed with it, but just make sure to follow the rules and remember that search engines can bring you a lot of free traffic if they like you.

Advanced Free Traffic Methods

These next two free traffic strategies might be a little advanced for beginners, but they should be learned by everyone because sooner or later you will get to this point and be able to use these methods.

While they don't require any direct money to do, they do require that you have some experience and have built up at least one site to an average level.

So keep in mind that although you may not be able to do these just yet, you soon will!

Email List Traffic

One of my all time favorite and easiest ways to drive traffic to my site or an affiliate offer is by sending an email to my email newsletter list. You might be saying to yourself right now that there is no way you can do that, you may only have a few people on your list if any at all. If that's you, don't forget the section above where I mentioned that you will get to this point soon enough.

The real "secret" is that you do not need a huge 10,000, 50,000, or 100,000 subscriber list to be able to do this. There are marketers out there right now with lists as small as a few hundred who can send many of those people to whatever site they want.

The key to having an email list and being able to send a lot of them to a site is your relationship with them. If you do not offer them great free information and keep up-to-date with them, it will be hard to gain their trust and keep them interested enough to read your emails.

However, once you have a list of subscribers, all you have to do is write up an email about whatever site you want them to go visit, and press the send button.

Here are a few important email list tips to remember;

- Don't simply send paid product ads to them every day.
- Teach them what they need to know throughout the course of a few months being on your list, along with some ads mixed in.
- Whatever you do, keep in regular contact with them. If you email them 3 times a week, keep doing that no matter what, don't all of a sudden leave for a week or two without talking to them.

So then how can you build your email list? Well there are many ways of doing it, and you can always implement all of them at once or only a few.

The easiest way would be to set-up an autoresponder form box on all of your web sites/blogs. Set it up so that you offer your visitors a free gift of some kind in exchange for joining your email list. If they like the content of your site, the chances are high that they will join your list to get more of the same great content.

If you have a WordPress blog, then adding an opt-in box is quite easy, all you have to do is grab the code from your autoresponder and paste it in your blog's sidebar widget. If however you have a static HTML web site, then you will need to know how and where to place the code on your site.

Joint venture giveaways are also a great way to build your list. These giveaways are sites that several marketers will join and contribute a gift to, at the same time promoting the giveaway to their own email list. In return all of the other marketers will do the same thing, and if it all goes well you will get many new subscribers joining your list to receive your gift.

Another way to get more subscribers would be to do all of the above traffic generating methods mentioned in this book. Any way that you can drive traffic to your site can also be used to build your list.

The other important aspect of building a list is the actual sign up process that visitors will go through. When a visitor fills out and submits the autoresponder form they should be taken to a confirmation page which states that they need to check their email to confirm their subscription. This page and the final download page are very important to driving more traffic to your other sites or affiliate offers.

There are so many marketers who are building their list, but leave the confirmation and download pages basically blank, with only the necessary information on it. Think about it, every single person who joins your list will at least see the confirmation page, and most will also see the download page if they check their email to confirm. So by placing ads on those pages you can see a lot more free traffic.

There is so much long-term success that can happen when you have an email list. If you are not yet building one, get started on it today!

The Possibilities of Joint Ventures

Once your site has been around for awhile or when you have built up an email list, you can probably now start looking for joint venture partners to help drive traffic to your site. I say that you should have a decent site and/or list because in order to do a proper JV with another marketer, you will have to give back in some way, usually by sending traffic to them or paying them a commission on sales.

If you have a list already, even if it's just a few hundred subscribers, you should easily be able to ad swap with another marketer. Ad swapping is basically sending an email to your list about a free gift that the other marketer has, and in return they do the same for you. What this will do is drive free traffic to your site/blog and encourage people to join your list. So not only are you getting the traffic upfront, but you are also building a list which as stated in the previous chapter can also continue to bring you free traffic.

JV deals can come in many different forms, even simply placing an affiliate banner on your site is a kind of joint venture. There are so many different ways that you can use JV's to send traffic to your site, it really comes down to understanding what you have to offer and how you can benefit the other partner.

If you own a product then the possibilities are even greater, as your joint venture partner doesn't always have to do too much for you, except maybe placing an ad for your product on their site, or in their newsletter, on their product download page, or even just mention it on their blog.

By teaming up with someone else, you both can see a lot more traffic and sales.

Here are a few ideas of how you can JV with someone else;

- Write a blog post about their product/gift, and ask them to do the same for you.
- Offer them a high commission for sending traffic to your paid product.
- Mention them in your next product you create as a good resource to use, and ask them to do something similar.
- Swap Twitter/Facebook friends by telling your followers how great they are.
- Set up a group joint venture where everyone in the group helps each other out with promotions and sending traffic.

If you feel that you are still too much of a beginner to do any joint ventures right now, don't let that stop you from helping out more advanced/more popular marketers. Yes, they might not be able to reciprocate right now to help you, but many of them will remember you when you become more advanced.

For example, if you are great at designing graphics, copywriting, or programming, offer to help them with those things. Often times advanced marketers will outsource these types of tasks, so ask them if you could do it for free or at a reduced cost. Don't be afraid to say straight out that you are new and want to help them so that they might be able to remember you later.

Once you start doing more and more JV's, those partners will tell other potential partners and sooner or later you will start receiving JV requests from all kinds of people, without you having to go out and look for them.

For getting free traffic and making more sales, joint ventures are great for that! Keep up a good relationship with your marketer friends because you never know when a JV might come in very handy for the both of you.

Repeat and Keep Growing!

Now that you know six of the best ways to drive targeted traffic to your web site, it's time to put it all into action. Some of the methods require more upfront work than others, but that's not to say that you should push them aside to do them later. No, it's important to start implementing as many traffic methods as you can!

However, to simply get started I would first use the social networking sites and forums because they can send you almost instant traffic without a lot of work. Then move on from there to article and submitting articles, blogging, then into the more advanced methods.

The real power comes over time when you have set several of these methods up and are receiving on-going free traffic to your sites. When you have a lot of articles out there and your blog is filled with many interesting posts, and you have done the proper search engine optimization, then that's where the automatic and continuous traffic comes into play.

Once you have a good grasp on one of the beginner tactics, move on to the next and keep adding more and more as you go. Soon enough you will be able to participate in joint ventures and other high end traffic methods, even paid methods since you will probably be bringing in a nice income by this point.

Don't get stuck with the small details or all of the other 'tricks' out there, focus on these proven strategies and take action!