



Designed by CheapestCovers.com

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Summary

Introduction

Hi there! Welcome to the first forum marketing guidebook.

Marketing is a powerful tool every internet marketer would need. There are thousands of people using forum as their marketing arch. But, it is shocking when I see that there has been no complete guide on forum marketing.

This manuscript is simply what you don't want to miss before getting fast typing. Here, you will find most basic things in starting to place yourself in world of forum, yet often left unconsciously.

I have seen some Internet marketers doing incredibly wrong in promoting their website through several forums. They go actively helping people but they did not achieve their target, even a sale! It is obvious that there's some breach from the law of forum marketing.

The latest example that I saw was in one great Internet Marketing's forum. So what do you think when I said Internet Marketing? It's all about domain, hosting, directories, autoresponders, blog, articles problem, and so on but it is suit enough to sell a car's spare part or perfumes?

Why I stress out forum very much. Take a look on my stats on the early days of my site. The highest click comes from one of forum I join, Warrior Forum.

Links from an external page (other web sites except search engines) - Full list	1800	22.3 %	2453	21.1 %
- http://www.warriorforum.com/forum/topic.asp	425	425		
- http://www.rahsiainternet.com/workshop/index.htm	389	389		
- http://rahsiainternet.com/workshop/	102	102		
- http://www.wangcyber.com/forum/viewtopic.php	93	93		
- http://www.road2millionaire.com	67	67		

After a year study about forum marketing, I have made up my mind to help you to generate more sales using the forum. I intended to give away some practical code for proper forming that will make you noticed faster, and add drastic change on your overall profits.

Forum Marketing Basics

Let's go back to the basic. What is your website is all about? What is your target buyer and how do you generate more money online? You need to determine this first before you further reading this e-book.

First of all, we need to know what the forum is is all about. Seriously, when you read this e-book, you should know the concept of Internet Forum and in this e-book, I did not stressing out the basic of forum because the main point in this book is how to sell your products or services using Internet Forum. If you have question on forum that we are talking, try this link:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_forum

Otherwise, you have already made up your mind with your goal, to have more sales through forum. Let's go!

Tip #1 – Forum Search

The first thing you must do carefully is to choose where you want to give your heart out, building reputation, or just chit chatting (whatever the reason). You don't want to waste your time looking into forum that didn't have enough members, low quality forum (in term of marketing your website or adequate knowledge) or just a left-over side project of other business!

There are more than know-how members that you must look for. I simplify things you must look onto certain forum:

1. Enough members.
Before registering into certain forum, check at the bottom of the forums. Usually, there's a panel highlighting new user register, and most important of all the number of member of the forum.
2. Active forums.
Check last date of newest post. Active forums should have all their popular thread have the today's post.
3. Forum related to your business/interest
What your business based on?
4. Certain rank (**popularity**) or **potential that have buzz factor**
You don't necessary have to join too popular forums, as that would be too crowded. Others won't notice you over a long time. However, choose a forum where you see there's buzz factor that can make the forumers stick to that forum.

You can find enormous link on good internet marketing forums at,

<http://internetmarketingforums.im4newbies.com/internet-marketing-forum-directory.htm>

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Below are some of my favorite forums, and what I've been looking for quite some time. Take a look at this forums.

1. <http://www.warriorforums.com/forum/>
2. <http://forums.digitalpoint.com>
3. <http://www.ultraebooks.com/forum>
4. <http://www.wangcyber.com>

Tip #2 – Nick Name

Now, it seems like everyone knows about forum, right? So, I hope I don't have to explain what forum is. This chapter defines the importance of your representative in forum. Your nickname.

Forumers are like your neighbours, roommates, housemate, friends and more of a big family. They will have a specific name where you would be comfortable calling or be called with. This important thing often ignored continuously by forumers, considering nick name doesn't play a role in building your reputation.

NICKNAME is your ultimate weapon.

Yes, names must be simple and easy to remember. It doesn't only apply on domain names, but also nickname.

Take a look on this example:

bitol vs feast_silver

najmi vs k_req1985

Which one do you prefer most? Which are the ones that are easier to remember? I would say bitol & najmi, because it contains less alphabets and easier to pronounce.

Other examples includes shuth (www.mohdsuhaimy.com), and kidino (www.moneyclicking.net).

You also can use your website name as your nickname. In this case, I think it is another way to promote your website, so it gives double impact! Examples? These forumers go by their domain name - saifulsham (www.saifulsham.com),

smartusaha (www.smartusaha.com). But remember that not all domain name is suitable for a nickname, it depends on the purpose of the website as well. Wouldn't it be weird if you found a forumer by the name cheapestcovers?

Exactly. :)

Here you go, once you have chosen a good nickname that you think would give you a good image, you are ready to go for these steps:

1. Equip the personal identification in the forum to be a good way marketing your business, (Nickname, Avatar and Signature)
2. Get to know other forumers and join the committee.
3. Build your reputations (Open thread, Contribution and Reputation)
4. Keep your momentum (Private Message, Advertising and Promotion, Smart Hijacker)

If you find a hard time choosing a nickname, don't worry. Don't be afraid to use your real name. However, the problem with real name is that there could be people with the same name as yours, but if your name is unique enough, that's a huge plus in branding yourself and your business eventually.

TIP # 3 - Avatar

What would you put on your avatar? It's a small capacity picture allowed for upload or online linking. Now, as a marketer think of avatar as your way to promote your product.

Now you wonder, everything is in need of advertising? Indeed. Yes!

Do you notice how much you will see Adidas, Mc D, and Nike everyday? They pay billions just to have the glimpse of their logo on air to television to mark their presence. The more air time the better for them so people will know immediately what service they're on.

You don't have to spend your precious money into that extent, considering they're reputable and big company. In term of forum, given you're in right crowd – you're giving advertising to potential customer using everything you have in hand.

Avatar, on the other hand is simple mark about you. Choose good avatar, as you will be behind those identity in the future of that forum. You will be asking help on your site design, giving thought on others or pouring problems and solution to critical situation other forumers had.

Do the forumers believe what you said if you're using fancy coloured picture of your favourite artist that didn't have anything to do with your business? Surely, there aren't many people trusting what you said because you don't appear serious about your business!

In case you want to appear somewhat dull and lame, do it.

A good avatar should tell something about your company. Company logo is appropriate. With signature and avatar telling something about your business, forumers tend to remember you better.

Choosing to put your company logo shows you're highly confidence about your company. Now, whatever you write in the forum will be the image of your company.

Write nicely and your company will gain reputation in a period of time. Forumers know what service you offer when you always contribute to the forum. The more you contribute, the more people sees your logo and service, and there's bigger potential of customer!

This is an advantage if you have solve or give honest taught on other's problem, they will remember you and don't be surprised if they had your company's logo in their mind when they're in search of service the type you offer.

Note that there's nothing wrong if you choose to put your own picture. Choose picture where you appear most convincing and smart, because it shows how you rate yourself and also how much ability you have on your service. It is a good sign of confident if you choose to put your picture as avatar.

Tip #4 - Signature

We have gone through how much you need to use everything given to promote your service.

It's the same with your signature. Signature usually implies to small space under each post where you give description about yourself or in our case, your company.

Signature is the best way to show your website to the community, or forum. It give people the idea of who we are, what we do, what service we're offering, what product we're selling, be it blogs, sites and many more. So, use it wisely to tell something about your service. You'll notice that I stress on this part more than anything else as it is important factor in good foruming.

Good use of signature will act as a form of viral marketing, while you enjoy the 'privilege' contributing to the forum community.

Let me describe what viral marketing is. Viral marketing is a marketing technique which is low-cost, and can possibly be a free way to introduce our business. It's like a virus; it spread out automatically without a single penny. Some examples are word-of-mouth, signature at an e-mail, signature at forum, word of IM, etc.

The important thing is you should read the Term of Service (TOS) before building your signature at forum. Please be aware that several forums have their own rules. Never violate the TOS or you will get banned. Some forums provide you to put your affiliate programs link, and some don't. Please be aware of that.

A year ago before my online business, I had joined several forums and what I found was, some signatures can be attracting to click and some don't. So, your

signature should be attractive. What do I mean by attractive? Does it have to be colorful and full of animated graphic?

NO. It means that it should be different from others, mostly your competitor.

Examples;

1) _____
E-book Cover (people can click here)

2) _____
<http://www.cheapestcovers.com>

3) _____
E-book Cover Design
<http://www.cheapestcovers.com>

4) _____
Professional E-book Cover Design at the Best Price
Best Support, Personalized Service, Your Satisfaction Guaranteed
<http://www.cheapestcovers.com>

Now, I'll explain one by one.

For the first one, people will know it's an e-book cover but what it is? Is it a service, is it a software or you just want to show-off your e-book cover? ;) Not good enough.

Second, you show your URL address but it is all about? Is it a seat covers or a box covers or album covers, etc? So it's not targeted, so think of your niche. What your business is all about. The good point is; people will see your URL.

Third, it's targeted but it is really common like others. It maybe attracts people who are curious but they may or may not be your potential customer. It doesn't stand out from the crowd.

Fourth, you provide the URL, your service, and killer words. You stand out from your competitor. You tell people why they should get your service/product. It attracts people to click the link. Even they don't click through your signature, they may remember your service and the URL, and maybe they will come to you. :)

My next tips, you can provide your FREE gift like free e-book, software, scripts, etc. People love free gift, so use it wisely. You can build up your reputation; increase your subscribers or maybe get free testimonial from them.

I just found a signature from a forum and it goes like this, "Don't Click Here!" (a link). So, a simple question for you, you would like to click or not? For the record, I clicked. ;)

Tip #5 - Open thread

Over some time you will be feeling fairly comfort to write and be a part of the forum. You notice, there's some problem not risen up by others. Now, we have come to the art of opening thread.

Firstly double check your topic if there had been similar cases or topic posted by other forumers. You might be accused if you post same topic posted a year ago. Unless there is significance reason because of the change over time, you can post same topic provided you write that you realize there had been same topic a while ago. Just to show that you have brief stint into the forum. ;)

With good topic and relevance attraction to your writing, you will attract people to reply. A good move if your thread have many views and replies, because they will navigate to the topic starter first to add their taught.

Imagine the thread have gone over 8 pages. Would you dare to read all previous reply message if you want to add something? Some people didn't have enough time, so they read on the topic starter first. *You might get some clicks to your site!*

For myself, I didn't open new thread that much because I usually don't see any relevance to open new topic. However if you come across good topic, don't wait! This will show how far you've gone in the business and credibility you have.

Opening new thread gives you chance to further tells them to go into your websites. Beware, you must do this unintentionally, as advertising in thread is mostly prohibited other than classified/advertising thread and etc. This method was called *squeeze thread*.

You might want others to comment on how your page looks. You can open new thread, on which method is better, let's say it goes "Which is better, pay first or later?" The headlines shows that you want to have a survey or taught on those methods. Go on with your problem and state your situation, lastly you can tell them what you've done at your site on that matter. You can ask others to have their look on your web site and comment.

It doesn't really look like a promotion, isn't it.?

When you have post your thread, remember to be active in your own thread to show that you really want to know about that matter. Also, don't forget to thanks others who have given well taught on your problem.

You can go a bit serious by offering prizes for those who give good solution for your problem. Maybe free e-book, monetary deals or merchandise of your products. It can go like this, "\$10 for those who can solve my problem!" You don't want to try? It is small amount, yet hard to resist.

Tip #6 – Contribution and Reputation

Generally, we want to contribute so that we can improve our reputation. You know how reputation gives you money. Often, it is simply clicks to your website from those who know you personally.

So how exactly you can contribute. We'll go through on how is the proper way for you to contribute. Bear in mind that other forumers have their own belief and the same as you, they can't stand harsh way of writing. Being rude in forums (or flaming) can set you popular, but for all the wrong reason!

Before you can start contributing, your very first post should be at the new members thread or in case there's no thread like that, just introduce yourself in any thread you would like to add your comment. You need to introduce yourself so others know you are serious in joining the forums. Often, you will be having a welcoming greet from other members and you will be given extra care from senior member of the forum.

As you go through contributing, remember to respect the senior member of the forum. They had much more time contributing to the forums and you don't want to cause problem with them by showing you're better than them. You may an expert in certain areas, but you're still a newbie if you're new in the forum. Being humble doesn't make you look idiot! In return, you will mark your presence in a better way.

Use your expertise by helping others in need because you might need help from them after that. If it is happen to be within the service you're offering, don't be too stingy, but do highlight what they can do and give some hints. You can tell them to further go to your site if they want. You might gain trust from other forumers by giving some benefits to them.

You can choose to contribute in high profile thread. Basically it is a thread that has high views. Check for high view thread because people will continue having their view on those threads. You surely don't want to leave this opportunity to stamp your mark on those topics. From then on, you can build your reputation.

Put your name at the very end of your post so that people know you. Typical example goes like this

“bla bla bla....

Just my 2 cents.

Bitol”

Or

“pardon me

Bitol”

People kept asking me, how to write or facing uphill task to contribute if they didn't have the proficiency to write in English. First of all, don't worry anything. You're not alone. My English is sucks as long as I can remember. I don't really care too much about my English. I just keep on writing. Bear in mind to make others understand what you really want to say.

Then comes the shyness. There's people becomes extremely shy in the 'real world' but a hyperactive talker in forum and vice versa. Usually feeling shy to write out your points of view has direct indication of being lack of confidence.

The key is be encourage yourself to be frank. The shy to write will occasionally evades once you have written certain number of posts. You can always assume forum as an offline marketing way, where you will be facing different types of

people as you go along promoting your product. Now, how you want others to treat you? You can see how it's works for me, as I practiced talking in front of the mirror to actually boost up my confidence.

It's all the same in the cyber world!

If you're somehow very precise about grammatical errors and worried that others would view you badly by a single error in your post, you can write the post in Word first. Remember to turn on your grammar checker!

Yes, you have to give it a go. Same advice when you start to have your first business on internet. Success wouldn't come overnight, and I am sure every one of us will all agree to the phrase. From my own experience, writing in a large or small volume in my blog over a period of time, helps me to improve my English. Thank God, now I wouldn't hesitate to write or speak English anymore.

Tip #7 – Private Message

You can opt to private message when you feel something more personal you need to counter with your forum friends. By using private message, you are in some sort of close friends in term of business. You might have some joint venture plan to talk about and doing it in the forum where internet marketers know each other is pretty nice strategy. You and your friends in the forum can be considered close family, where you encounter same principle and exposure in the forum. So, you can predict your potential JV's attitude.

When writing private message keep in mind to make it at least 6 lines. This shows that you are serious. You need to be serious in business because seriousness is everything. You can say anything for remaining 2 lines for your question. Maybe, taught on his/her page, suggestion, and a little hint on sophisticated plug-ins in his website.

Private message can be good tools to capitalize your business. You and other forumers share intimate time together aside of those business. You have been through many aspect of reality arisen in the forum. You should realize that you might have same knowledge about some issues. So, remember to use private message rather than using your email. You use your email, maybe they didn't know you're his buddy in Warrior Forum, just for example!

There's certain ettique of email you should follow when writing private message.

1. Most of all DON'T SPAM. Because everyone hate spam as much as you do. Tip#10 will deal with SPAM.
2. Always bear in mind to use greet your potential JV nicely.
Example:

Hi John, *[Greeting, remember to use their name and extra careful with spelling]*

I have seen your website and I'm impressed with the way you manage your ad.

[Compliment]

.....

[Your subject on matters]

Thanks,

Regards,

Bitol

www.cheapestcovers.com

[The ending note should stamp your business, so the recipient know you're talking business]

3. Don't use harsh word.

I'm sure you'll know the outcome if you use harsh words. In case you're dealing with close friends who like harsh words, don't do it!

4. Be professional.

This applies to all first private message. However, when you go along the way of your partnership, maybe you notice there's more understanding by being casual. However, give your prospects some respect on whatever occasion you are dealing.

Tip #8 - Advertising and Promotion

Once in a while, you need to follow traditions of other forumers. Give out promotion for your beloved one at the forum. Remember, the forum is packed of potential that can easily spread out your service to their friends.

You can give away promotion about your service. I advise you to give 50% off your product to attract and value your friends. If you are running affiliates give benefits if they buy or make a sale. It is recommended that you have try the product so you can review them in the forum.

For example, I am running e-book cover business and after some months I give out promotion of offer. This is a wake up call for others that want to want to try my service. You will get potential customers to try out your service.

If it didn't turn out that way, they may be talking about your service in their personal blogs or promote your service offline. I managed to have 20 e-book cover per month basis by giving out One Time Offer to my fellow friends at Warrior Forums. That was something I didn't look up to when I giving out the promotion. I intended to occasionally give my friends an extra privilege.

However, I got a contract on monthly basis. So, I wouldn't need to worry if my site goes under construction because I have secured contract from my friends of the forum.

See, now you get jealous!

Usually there's advertisement thread on every forum. So, you can put your service offer there. Beware if you plan to give out offers on normal thread, because usually that type of advertisement is prohibited.

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Remember, you can add the buzz by using your signature to tell about your offer. Whether directing to your site, your advertisement thread, or sales letter of the offer. Give details about what you are offering precisely, to enhance the probability of forumers to notice your service.

Tip #9 - Smart Hijacker

Do you know the meaning of smart hijacker? No, it definitely not likes hijacking a plane!

In business way, I would define being with wits and out of your competitor. Hijacker is a person who hijack. To stop, steal, seize or swindle. It is anything that has to do by taking advantage of others.

Sometimes, sooner or later how much niche your product or service. You would encounter businessman offering same service. So what you should do?

Thinking to knock him out?

Nervous and feel dizzy?

Or be humble and shy seeing his website is hotter.

Answer. None

Rather, you can contribute in his forum as much as you want everyone contribute into your thread. There's nothing too hard to sort out that, it is far better to befriend your enemy than starting a war. When your competitors start their promotion, give a look at their website and give your honest comments. You might outshine your competitors in their own thread if others see your service or promotion give higher profits.

Remember, because there would be direct comparing of your service, you should prepare by giving better service/promotion/value. For example, your service might be \$2 more expensive than your competitors, make it well known that your service speaks for its price. Sometimes, you need to be firm and confident with your ability.

Being nice with your competitors might lead you to a potential Joint Venture partner.

I reckon having someone running same service with me giving much thought of his experience to me. I should be thankful and of course people at the forum rate him high because of his 'novelty'. =)

Tip #10 - SPAM

In this topic you would go for a very repetitive word you ever heard in Internet Marketing. This is a thing every ethic code in Cyber world would condemn.

SPAM.

SPAM is a disruptive message posted on a computer network. In your situation, SPAM is every message that didn't relate to what is being discussed in the forum or basically one liner SPAM.

However, there's forum that define SPAM differently. Some forums may define flaming as SPAM. You can check the FAQ page of the forum to further get the information on how the forum defines SPAM.

Why people hate SPAM? Spamming is an easy way to increase your number of post. The number of post usually defines the rank you have in forums. It's the same like playing cheat into your friends. You didn't follow good way, even if you're escaped from account deletion, you may be having bad reputation among the forumers.

People dislike SPAM also because of the characteristic of the comment. Usually, SPAM didn't carry much thought but rather to add spice on the discussion. It doesn't change the direction of the discussion and not worth reading, making others feel irritated.

Before you post, think on how to make your post doesn't resemble SPAM. Make your post longer than two lines and contain a deep thought from you although not necessarily brilliant idea.

Summary

Now you have finished reading this manuscript. Congratulations!

Theoretically, you're ready to take advantage of being in the community which also house the big names aside from the ordinary internet marketer. I want to finally stress, that you would get potential customer that is completely different from the ordinary one.

These strategies are very basic so you might have known them from your experience. However, for those who are new to forum as I myself experience some years before, this manuscript is for you to compliment all internet marketing strategies that you going to use.

Now, you have already equipped with the tools and informations. The only thing you need to do is the ultimate key.

Just do it.

Regards,

Hafiz Latif

<http://www.cheapestcovers.com>

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