

New media promotion

The internet offers you a far wider range of ways to communicate with your customers than a few years ago. This article brings you up to date on RSS feeds, blogs and more. Try out different tools each month, telling people what you are doing through forums and your newsletter, and see which ones attract visitors to your site and lead to sales.

Blogs

A blog (or web log) is an online diary. It can be a great way to build relationships with customers and potential clients.

Customers may not be interested in the ins and outs of your personal life, so think whether you can provide unique and interesting content for your blog to draw in new visitors and attract customers back for repeat visits.

Link from your website to your blog and back again. Use text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to your topic. A selection of quality links will make your blog rank more highly, but do not add irrelevant links just for the sake of it.

When planning your blog, think how often you will update it, and stick to this plan. You need regular fresh content to get repeat visitors to value your site.

Other social media

You can also create a Podcast, which is an audio file containing a spoken message or programme. If you had some tips or thoughts to share you could record them onto your pc, and link to the broadcast from your website or blog.

Similarly, sites like Youtube.com allow you to create small videos and put them up on the internet.

Virtual communities like Myspace.com give you the opportunity to create a page which can have lots of information about and links to your business.

To create mini magazines which can be downloaded to mobile phones, visit www.tocmag.com.

Using this sort of technology allows you to share your expertise in increasingly diverse and creative ways, and reach new customers. However, each one will take some time to create and a blog or Myspace site will also need regular updates. Out-of-date information does nothing for your business.

Really Simple Syndication

One more technological breakthrough is the RSS feed. This is a little piece of software that allows people to get automatic updates when you put something new on your site or blog. On web pages, web feeds (RSS or Atom) are typically linked with the word "Subscribe", an orange rectangle, or with the letters RSS. The regular updates to your content will also help with your site rankings. See if you or your web designer can add one to your site.