

How To Generate Web Site Traffic

By Rod Means, San Diego, California

Create a professionally-produced Web site that is simple to navigate, professional, uncomplicated and informative. Don't try to get a \$10,000 Web site for \$100 from a college kid. Shop around. Many design firms will be willing to create an alliance with you at a minimal expense so they can use SCORE as a center of influence in selling to others. While SCORE does not recommend or endorse products or services, SCORE volunteers can tell clients seeking to create a Web presence about your Web vendor.

Links on Other Sites are Important

Ask companies and organizations to establish links to your chapter Web site. Avoid establishing reciprocal links. Once someone is on your site you don't want them to leave. Your linking plan should include every Chamber of Commerce and/or Business Improvement District or similar groups in your market area. Also approach every appropriate governmental agency, including cities, counties, offices of small business, business license bureaus, import/export agencies, state legislators, congressmen, senators, etc. Finally, reach out to small business trade associations.

Measure links by logging onto www.google.com and typing your chapter phone number in the search space. You may be surprised at what is there. Also check out www.linkpopularity.com and www.alexa.com.

Make Your Chapter URL Visible

Print your chapter URL web address on all SCORE materials, from business cards, flyers, out going email or letters from your office or each counselor, etc. Emphasize and train whoever answers your chapter phone to quickly qualify the caller and recommend they go to your Web site which has professionally-developed information about SCORE services. This allows the receptionist spend their time giving business advice or making an appointment.

Encourage Users to Register

On your chapter Web site, use "Free Business Stuff" links to information on how to get a business license, fictitious name, loan, etc. The user must register by providing their email address where they give you permission to send them the latest news by email. This becomes a valuable client prospect database.

Enable visitors to easily register for workshops online with a credit card. In every inquiry always ask “How did you hear about SCORE?” Pay attention to how you are getting site visitors.

Purchase Related URLs

Purchase several linked URL addresses, i.e. www.scoremycity.org, www.scoremycity.com, www.scoremycity.net, www.score-mycity.org, etc., and point those URLs to your actual chapter Web site. For example you can log on to www.namecheap.com and reserve each URL at a cost of \$8.88 per year.

Outstanding Web site examples are www.score-sandiego.org or www.nyc.gov (New York City). Look into the use of auto responders such as www.aweber.com. Look into tricks to avoid a growing number of spam filters. Finally, check out www.extremetracking.com to track all visitors to your site over variable time periods.