11 Ways to Promote Your Website and Get it Working for You
Introduction

After having a website built, most organisations do little to promote it. Submitting your site to the main search engines (which is part of our service) is an essential first step, but you can greatly increase the number of visitors to your site by applying a combination of traditional marketing techniques and simple internet promotional methods.

Using the methods listed in this publication, you can also improve the ‘quality’ of visitors - ie. increase the likelihood that those visitors will be genuinely interested in your products or services, and therefore are more likely to become customers.
1. **Building Links**

Arranging links from other websites to yours is a very good way to improve your search engine ranking and drive extra visitors to your website. Links from quality sites with high traffic have the most positive impact on search engine ranking, because the quality of the referring website is taken into account.

**Tip:** Find out which of your competitors rank highly in the search engines for your chosen search phrases. For each, find out which websites link through to theirs (these are known as referrers), then request links to your website from these referrers. An easy way to find out who links to a competitor website is to search Google for the following...

```
link:www.website.co.uk -site:www.website.co.uk
```

...replacing both instances of `www.website.co.uk` with the web address of your competitor. For example, to find out who links to the Moonpig.com website you would search for...

```
link:www.moonpig.com -site:www.moonpig.com
```

Note: Be sure to leave a space before the dash.
2. Content

Providing useful and informative content on your website is one of the best ways to encourage other website owners to link to you, thus increasing your traffic. Providing content is simple and inexpensive. Time spent on developing content can reap rewards as content can provide you with free promotion and can help to build your credibility amongst potential or existing clients.

Content can take many forms. Some of the more basic or straightforward are photos of your premises, staff or products and testimonials from satisfied customers.

Another method of developing useful content is to note down questions you are often asked by clients. The answers to these questions can then form the basis of content which is clearly useful to clients. These answers could be included on your website in the form of a “Frequently Asked Questions” page (also known as a ‘FAQ’).
3. **Trade Association Web Links**

If you belong to trade associations which have online member lists or directories, ask for a link. Consider paying a small amount for this if necessary, as any traffic coming from such a source will be highly targeted and thus valuable.
4. **Submit Your Site to Specialised Directories**

There are web directories which are focused on particular industries, such as education or finance. If there are specialised directories relating to your area of business, links in these may also be useful in driving targeted visitors to your website.
Include Your Web Address in All Your Promotional Materials and on Company Social Media Accounts

Ensure your web address is printed on to all your business cards, compliment slips, letter heads, flyers and brochures, etc. Make sure also that any standard templates you use when word processing (for quotations, invoices, letters, etc) also include your web address.

Include your web address in any display or classified ads you purchase in trade journals, newspapers, directories, etc. As the size and scope of your website enables it to do a much better job of explaining your service and your unique selling points than the advertisement itself, use the ad to capture the readers attention and then direct them to your website for more information.

Always make sure your web address is featured prominently enough and consider giving its readers a reason to visit ie. “For weekly special offers on top quality kitchen tiles visit www.website.co.uk”

Consider using other traditional media to prompt people to visit your website, such as mailshots, classified ads and postcards. In general, wherever you write your postal address or telephone number, add your web address as an extra line.

If your company has a presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or any social media, make sure you add your web address in the account contact details.
Have Your Web Address Included On Your ‘Shop Front’ and on Company Vehicles

If you are a conventional high-street business, arrange for your web address to be added to your shop-front signage or window space. You can also arrange for the website address to be added to the side of company vehicles as mobile advertising.
7. **Include Your Web Address in Your E-mail Signature**

An e-mail signature is a block of text which can be automatically added to the end of each e-mail message you send. Your e-mail signature should contain your Company name, address, phone number, e-mail address, web address, and perhaps a one line description of your company.

Signatures are very easy to set up but the instructions vary depending on the e-mail software you use. To find the instructions for your particular software, the easiest way is usually just to open the ‘Help’ tool within the program itself and search for ‘signatures’.

Look for examples of effective signatures in e-mail messages sent to you and amend your own in the light of this experience.
8. **Purchase Pay Per Click (PPC) Ads with Google AdWords or Bing (Microsoft)**

Pay per click ads with Google or Bing allow your link to appear alongside “organic” (ie. non-pay) search engine results for chosen keywords or phrases. Your ranking on these search engines is partly determined by how much you’ve bid for a particular search phrase compared to other businesses. This can be a cost-effective way to get targeted traffic, since you only pay when someone actually clicks on the link.

http://adwords.google.co.uk

http://advertise.bingads.microsoft.com/en-uk

**Tip:** If you decide to explore pay per click, start with low bids on several key phrases which are very specific to your business.
Choose Target Keyphrases and Use Them in Your Website

Anyone who wants to improve their search engine ranking should first decide which search phrases they wish to target. Choose relevant keyphrases (2 or 3 words per page) rather than single keywords because it is extremely difficult to achieve a high ranking against single word searches - there is simply too much competition. One approach is to combine a service with a place, eg. “carpets Blackburn”.

Once you have your phrases, try to work them into your first paragraph of text and also into the page title (the text which appears on the very top of your browser window). If you can, use them within headings on the page.

Don’t overdo it though! More is not better. Nowadays, Google and other major search engines are very good at spotting pages with keywords *crammed in* and this can lead to the demotion or even banning of your website on a particular search engine.

You can apply this process to each page of your site using different sets of target phrases for each.

**Note:** Search engine optimisation is an ongoing process of trial and error with continually moving goalposts, and there is no guarantee of success.
Promote Your Site in Online Discussion Groups and Blogs

Use a search engine to find online discussion groups or blogs which relate to or mention your products or services. Register (if necessary) and join the discussion, or comment on the blog posts. Be careful not to blatantly advertise your products and services. Bloggers will often delete any comments which are purely advertising, and online forum communities usually react very badly to obvious self-promotion.

The correct approach is to join in and contribute helpfully to the debate or discussion while including your website address in a ‘signature’ at the foot of any messages you post *

In this way, people will get to know and trust you, visit your site, and hopefully do business with you.

* Online forums usually allow users to customize their profiles, allowing you to create a signature and set it to automatically be added to your forum messages.
Write Articles

Write interesting articles in your area of expertise and submit them to online publications in your field, or for free use in electronic magazines (also known as e-zines) or newsletters. The most read articles are those which teach and inform. At the end of every article, include a description of your company and your website address.

There are a number of sites where you can submit your article for free, such as http://www.ezinearticles.com