Imaginet eBook: How to Promote Your New Website

Now that you have created your eye-catching and interesting web page with [Imaginet's Web Creator](), how do you promote it? No matter how well designed and appealing your site may be it must contend with millions of other web pages online. There is not much point in spending time and effort creating a great web site when it is buried too deeply in the search engine index for anyone to see. This means that you have to ensure that it is placed as high as possible in the search engine ranking – which also means that certain marketing tools and techniques need to be implemented in order for your web site to be as visible as possible. This short eBook is intended to introduce you to some essential aspects of web promotion and marketing to ensure that your site is seen by as many people as possible.

What should you do first?

The first step is to make sure that your site will be well received by checking for consistency and logical construction. What this means is that you should test your site from the viewer's perspective to ensure that what you intend to present is being clearly perceived.

This aspect is extremely important. Often when creating a web site we assume many things and create different sections from our perspective and not from the point of view of the incoming client or visitor. Make sure that your site is simply and clearly designed and not too busy. Check as well that the different sections and pages are linked in an easily understandable and sequential way. Remember that people will not stay for long on your web site if it has a confusing structure that is difficult to understand. Test yourself by asking this question: How long would it take a visitor to understand what my site is all about? If your answer is more than ten seconds then you need to rethink the structure and wording of your site.

The structure of your web site also refers to the important point that it should be easy for a visitor to find the content that he or she wants. This means that the various pages and directories should be organized in an easily comprehensible way.

Consider the following example of a simple, but effective landing page structure that can be a starting point for you to work from:
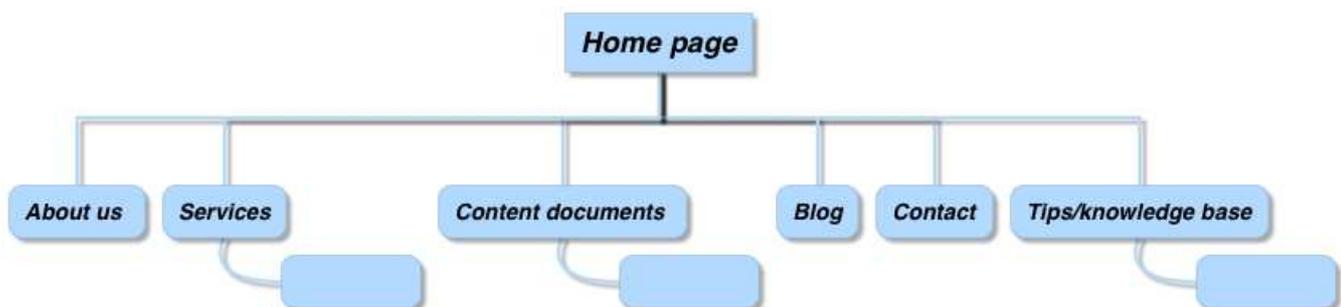
Next – ensure your site has basic search engine optimization.

What is Search Engine Optimization or SEO? SEO refers to the process of optimising your web site so that the search engines will place it near the top of the list when people search for certain keywords. The structure of your website is also of vital importance for SEO. This process is aimed at ensuring that your web pages rank highly in the search engine index. In other words, when someone uses Google or other search engines to search for your product or topic, your site should feature among the top links.

SEO is a complex, multi-faceted and diverse process but here are a few things that you should do that are essential to ensure the visibility of your web site.

Keywords:

Choose three or four keywords or phrases that best represent your product or service. Do not choose more than six keywords and try to be as selective as possible, so that you choose only those keywords or phrases that will bring you directed traffic. These keywords should also be represented in the text of your web site, as well as in the meta tabs (more on this later).

Keywords or phrases should be carefully selected and you should try to find words that provide **good search rates** but which are not too **highly competitive**. In other words, you want words or phrases in your title, description and content that is often used in searches but which do not have too much competition from other companies. If you are starting out online it is very difficult to compete with keywords used by

established brands and companies - this is why you should search for words with a lower rate of competition.

A good place to finds out which words and phrases would best suit your site is the Google Keywords tool (http://www.googlekeywordtool.com/) which also allows you to see the number of searches for each word or phrase as well as the competitiveness of a specific word or phrase. **More on this aspect in our advanced version of this eBook – watch our [Facebook site](#) for announcements.**

You should also pay attention to ....Meta Tags

Meta Tags are portions of code that are invisible to the viewer but visible to the search engines and they can play a role in the way that your site is ranked and appears in the search engines. In technical terms, tags are code portions that appear at the top of your HTML inside the < head> area. This informs the viewer about the contents and purposes of your page in the case of the title tag.

However, a major search engine like Google no longer places much emphasis on Meta Tags, so we will only focus on the two most important tags that you should pay attention to; namely, the title of your page and the description.

The title of your site is crucial. You should spend time making sure that your title tag is optimized. Here are some hints:

Firstly, the title tag should contain important keywords to help the search engine determine what the page is about. Secondly, it is important that you compose your title tag with the human element in mind - in other words, try to think what would most likely attract your intended viewer. This is what the title tag looks like:

<head> <title>the title of your page</title>

- **REMEMBER,** the title is extremely important in that it tells the search engines what your page is about.
- **Length:** Title tags should be a maximum of 70 characters long, including spaces.
- **Keyword Placement:** Your most important keywords need to be first in your title tag, with your least important words last.

The Description Meta Tag

This is what the description tag looks like in the code of your web page:

<head> <meta name="description" content="This is an example of a meta description. This will often show up in search results."> </head>

- This tag informs the search engine what your page or site is about:
- It helps to bring visitors to your site. In other words, a well constructed and directed description can help to increase the number of visitors clicking through to your site. The description should therefore be as enticing as possible. Many online marketers suggest a "call- to-action" description tag

"Call-to-action" simply means a description that is intended to get the visitor to do something or perform some action: for example: "*Download your free eBook and learn how to increase your site traffic.*" For some very useful tips on how to construct a good call-to-action description go to http://www.slideshare.net/HubSpot/20-dos-donts-for-clickable-callstoaction

External promotion of **your site**

Once your site is optimized internally, work should begin to find ways of increasing visitors to your site.

Content

Content has become a central aspect of web site promotion. Good quality content is one of the most important ways of attracting people to your site. Gone are the days when it was sufficient for a site to be merely an online advert for a service or product. Modern web sites have to offer value to the client or visitor and this value can be understood as insightful, visually attractive and informative content. As one commentator emphasizes, "...you should make sure most of your investment is devoted to content. This seems to be preferable to graphic design, old-school

search-engine optimisation, or linking campaigns".

(http://www.webcredible.co.uk/user-friendly-resources/search-engine-

optimisation/google-content.shtml)

For example, if your web site deals with selling flowers you could develop a section

on various tips on how to ensure the prolonged freshness of flowers or even a

detailed section on the different flowers and their botanical history.

Here are few examples of sites that provide good content, which have attracted

thousands of followers.

- Zen Habits (http://zenhabits.net/about/) provides tips and ideas on healthy

  living and thinking that can be used in daily life. The content is the main

  driving force of the site.

- Copyblogger (http://www.copyblogger.com/) provides very useful and

  insightful blog and ideas and tools for content marketing. Note as well the

  prominent call-to-action links.
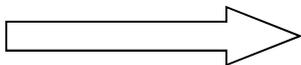
- Mailchimp (http://mailchimp.com/) is a site worth researching for the clear and

  non-nonsense use of content. There is no hype or overblown advertising but

  rather direct and to-the-point descriptions and information.

Here are a number of points that you should keep in mind when adding content to your site:

- Update your content at least once a week

- Make sure that there are no spelling or grammatical errors

- Divide your written content into short paragraphs.

A very successful way to increase traffic through content it to create a blog that reflects not only your products but also your interests and views about your industry of profession.

Blogs have developed into an important content medium - and a means of attracting visitors and clients to your site. You can create a blog on your site or use one of the many free blogging sites such as Blogger.com and Wordpress.com that supply you with a template and tools that help you to create your own blog.

A vital point to consider is that content does not only refer to written text. There are many other ways of attracting viewers through content such as videos, presentations, audio, as well as graphics and images. For example, the following image is known as an infographic, which is a way of visually presenting useful information – and which is in itself a very popular type of content that you could

easily create for your site. (More on how to create your own infographic in our advanced eBook on promoting your Web site – once again watch our [Facebook](#) page and [Twitter](#) for announcements).

What Makes the Best Website Content?

The best website content is:

① Useful

★ Customers want content that:

- ★ Teaches them something new
- ★ Answers a question
- ★ Helps them make a buying decision

★ By being useful, you are building trust and goodwill, both of which influence whether folks buy from you

② Original

★ Even if a topic is covered elsewhere, if it is relevent to your customers, create some original content about it

- ★ This makes your site the one-stop source of info - a great way to drive continual traffic

★ Two ideas:

- ★ Give your own unique insights and thoughts on the topic
- ★ Discuss/review other posts on the topic (content curation)

③ Credible

★ Your customers want credible information - content they can trust

★ You will become credible by continually producing useful and original content

★ In the meantime:

- ★ Use your "About" page to establish initial credibility
- ★ "Borrow" credibility from established experts: conduct interviews & ask for guest posts

④ Friendly
(to people & search engines)

- ★ Writing in a "forced" way just to please search engines is so yesterday
- ★ Search engine companies work hard so that their engines judge content in the same way that people do

★ **Therefore, create content for people**

★ But don't forget SEO basics such as keywords, title and descriptions

Learn a bunch more about content marketing at (link is case-sensitive): http://bit.ly/LGUdG7

Important: Imaginet will soon be publishing a comprehensive guide to blogging and content creation. Watch this space.

Social Networking

Using social media to promote your web site is essential. The various social networks provide a great opportunity to promote and advertise your site. However, be prepared to put in some time in developing your social networks as they require continual input and measurement to promote your site successfully.

There are a number of social networks that are central and which you should consider. These are Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Plus and Pinterest.

Depending on your intended audience you can also consider popular sites like Instagram and YouTube.

The secret to successful website promotion via social networking is to choose those networks that suit your aims and content. Twitter for example is a perfect platform for short updates, links to informative content on your site and others and a quick way of keeping your followers and clients up-to–date on what is happing in your business or profession. A site like Pinterest on the other hand is completely visual and a perfect network for promoting images of your products

The following are some of the central features of the main social networks.

Essentially, Twitter is an online network that allows the user to receive and send messages of 140 characters – which refers to the famous 'Tweets'. Twitter is also referred to as a 'micro-blog' and while it is limited by the fixed set of characters that you can input, it is a very effective communications tool. (Note: there are ways around this text limitation – but that will be dealt within a more advanced and in-depth book on twitter that will be published by IMAGINET soon).

Twitter has developed into much more than just an online space for social conversation. For example, it is used extensively by researchers and academics to find and share information, as well as by many businesses to enable more effective customer relationships and to ascertain the perceptions and reception of their products. There are many different ways in which this social network can be used; for example, it can be used by a family to keep in touch, or a company to coordinate business, by the media to keep people informed - or by a writer or musician to build up a fan base.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is where one really sees the value of online networking in terms of communication and relationship building. Whether you are a writer, entrepreneur, candle stick maker or model, you need this network to provide you with a presence and to connect you to like –minded professional and business people.

However, while the principle of communication and sharing is the same as for Twitter, LinkedIn has a different demographic in mind. This social network is not aimed at casual chatting or sharing news about your family. The LinkedIn learning centre provides the clearest description of this site.

> LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network with over 120 million members and growing rapidly. LinkedIn connects you to your trusted contacts and helps you exchange knowledge, ideas, and opportunities with a broader network of professionals. (http://learn.linkedin.com/what-is-linkedin/)

So, this network has a more serious intention in mind and is aimed at making professional or work-related connections. For example, if you are the CEO of a company and would like to connect with other members of your industry and possibly

create new business contacts, then this is the social network for you – and this applies to any profession or career path.

Facebook

Facebook probably needs no introduction to most people. Essentially Facebook, like the other sites discussed, is a network of people. The aim and object of joining Facebook is to connect and interact with friends in the network. This is facilitated by sending a request to be a friend on Facebook, which is confirmed or rejected and vice versa. There are also many other activities that you can involve yourself in which expand your presence and interaction with others. For example, you can upload your latest holiday photos for your friends to see, post interesting links or update your current status or feelings about life.

Google Plus
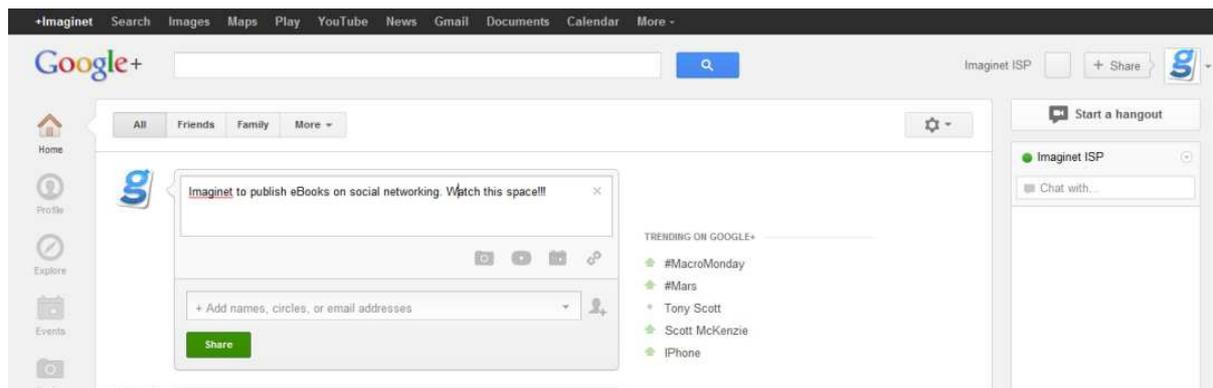
If you are familiar with Facebook and Twitter, then you will recognize the networking processes of Google Plus and becoming an expert on this social network will be a short learning curve. However, there are some very important differences between Google Plus and similar sites like Facebook that you need to know about.

This network is touted as being a combination of the best attributes of the Facebook, Twitter, Skype, Digg and other forms of social media. The origins of this network go back to before the advent of Facebook. One can refer the beginnings of Google Plus to a social networking site launched by Google in 2004 known as Orkut, which never really became very well known internationally.

> For more on the history of this network go to this link on the history of Google Plus. http://www.howstuffworks.com/internet/social-networking/networks/google-plus.htm

Google Plus provides some very useful methods of communication as well as ways of interacting with others.

And Finally, Pinterest…
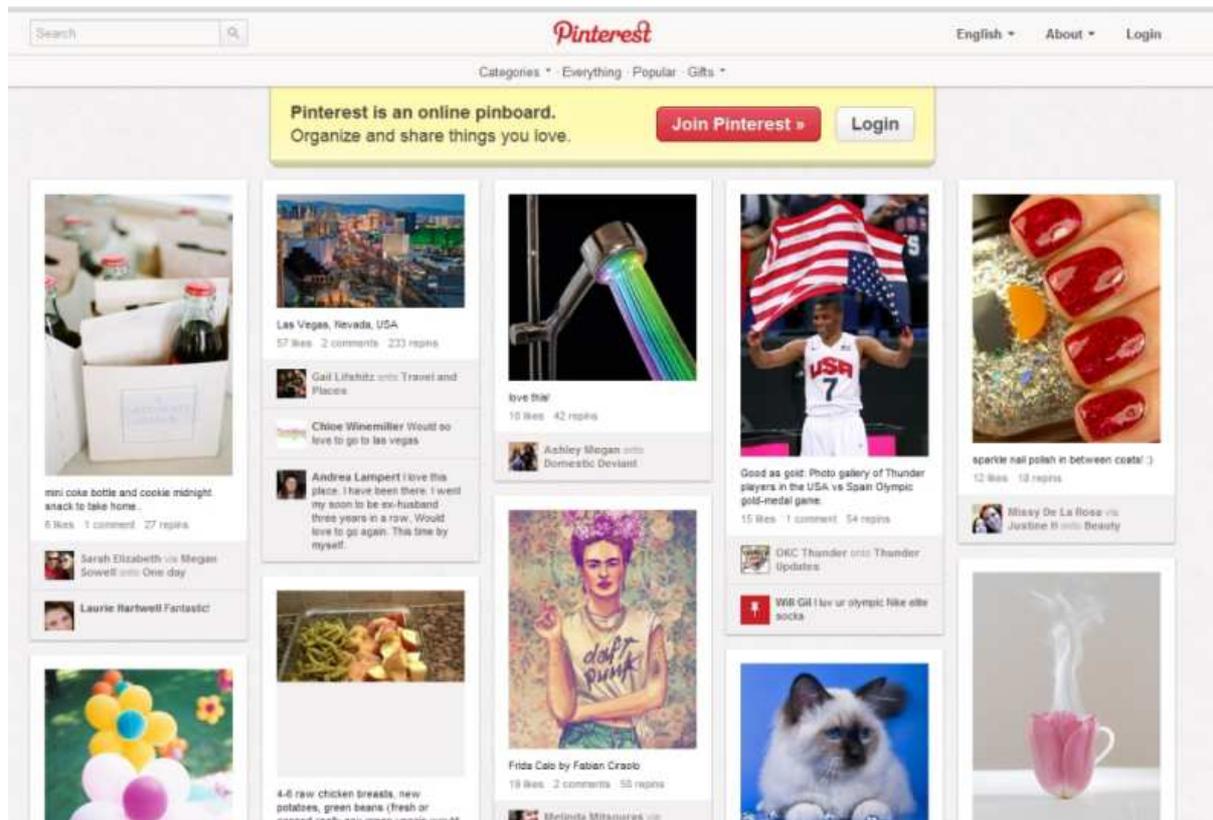
At first glance Pinterest appears to be little more than a scrapbooking site where you can attach or "pin" your favourite images to share with others. It is described as a social network that allows users share any images that they find of interest and to create themes to organize these images. For example one can create "boards" or themed pages of your favourite art, cars or cakes. In essence, the site allows users to share their tastes, interests and obsessions with like-minded people,

However, Pinterest is no minor site. It is one of the fastest growing social networks in Internet history and outshines even Facebook in its rapid growth. Pinterest is the third-largest such network behind only Facebook and Twitter and has grown over 4,000% in the last 6 months. (http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/02/02/7-ways-to-use-pinterest-to-promote-your-business)

What is very distinctive and possibly the central attraction of this social network is that it extremely visual in its focus on images. When the author of this eBook undertook an impromptu survey to find out why this social network was so popular, he found that two aspects seem to strike users: the first was the visual aspect of the site and the economic ease of use in the facility to quickly access images on web sites for inclusion on one's boards. As one commentator noted;   Image centric social networks are rapidly gaining market share due to their high engagement levels. "Everyone apparently loves an enticing photo". (http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/02/02/7-ways-to-use-pinterest-to-promote-your-business/)

What you should do first

It is essential to ensure that your site is represented on the social networks. Create a Facebook, Twitter and Google Plus account for your site and populate these accounts with content relevant to your service or product. For a full overview download Imaginet's guide to Social Networking

Other methods of promotion

The above only touches on the main and central ways of promoting your web site. There are dozens of other tried and tested ways of getting your site noticed. Registering your web site on established and recognized business and other online directories is one useful method that can generate incoming links; another is making use of many free and paid for news release sites, as well as RSS feeds. These

aspects will all be discussed in detail in the extended version of this guide that will be published soon. Join our twitter account for the latest updates.

We hope that this short guide has been of use in the promotion of your site. One last thought – don't rely on quick on automated ways of promoting your site. The modern internet is fast developing into an online environment where trust, interaction and contact are the main values that drive communication and commerce. Spend time on communicating and interacting with others via your social networks and this will pay off in the long term.

If you have any ideas and comments, or questions, that you would like to share with us or if you would just like to tell us what a great company we are, send an email or contact us via any of our social networks.

Twitter   Facebook   LinkedIn   Google Plus

Remember that Imaginet is busy preparing an entire range of advance eBooks on each social Network. These publications will be announced via Twitter at @imaginetsa; as well as on our Website (www.imaginet.co.za) and on our Facebook and Google Plus pages.