

Outside Promotion

Using Leverage to Increase Online Revenue

BY KEN COURTRIGHT

Leverage is one of the fastest techniques you can use to grow a website. There are a lot of ways you can use leverage to increase your website revenue.

Recently, one of the 200 websites I helped launched for my company received 100,000 hits and reviews in a 90-minute period, thanks to one pretty and popular actress. We had asked her if she would review our website, and whether the product was something she would buy. We said, "If you like this product, would you do us a favor and Tweet about it?" She did, and she also ended up buying the product. And because she had such a strong Twitter following, her endorsements caused thousands of her fans to jump on our website that day. We saw explosive growth and maintained a 2 percent lift after that one mention.

Of course, not every website owner knows an actress they can call up for an endorsement on social media. So how can

the non-celebrity-knowing businessperson use this same premise to leverage their site?

One of the challenges we often give our website partners is to go out and befriend what we like to call your "top five sneezers." In every industry – whether it's dental care, weather, construction, or floor repair – there are a handful of prominent websites with a large following. They might be blogs or corporate websites, but the reality is that every industry has brands with a following. If you can dial down to the specific people of influence behind those brands (social-savvy C-level execs, evangelists, popular bloggers), you've found your "sneezers." They spew information, and that information goes viral.

So, find out who the big virus-spewing sneezers are in your space, so to speak. Hunt them down, and see if you can get them to recognize you publicly. You can approach a sneezer and ask him or her to:

- Review a product for you
- Simply mention you on the Internet
- Let you guest post for his or her website

Your next question might be, why would any sneezer want to give me the time of day? Well, put yourself in his shoes for a moment. What are his needs and wants? What is the inner psychology of the sneezer? Instead of just attacking him with a plea for promotion, ask the sneezer how you can help him.

No matter what the size of your business, the type of product or service you sell, or the length of time you've been in business, you have value to add. One of the most obvious ways you can add value to a sneezer is to become an advocate or ambassador of his brand. So, one approach might be to take the initiative to help the sneezer build his own brand by advocating for him online. If you can help promote the sneezer's message and physically grow his following, you are doing for him what he already spends a lot of his day doing.

Then, at some point in the future, you can use this established relationship to contact the sneezer and say, "You might not know me, but I'm a big fan. I've created a fan club of sorts, and convinced XX people to follow you. I just wanted to reach out and say hello."

Once you've established a connection, then perhaps on the second or third point of contact, you can call in a favor. "Hey, would you mind checking out my website?" Chances are, he'll be glad to help such an enthusiastic ambassador for his brand. 195



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