



The Online Marketing Guide For Local Business

DALLAS MEDIA

Internet Marketing For Local Businesses

4 GREAT WAYS TO MARKET
YOUR BUSINESS WITH
TWITTER



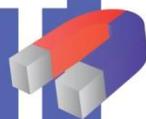
GET TRAFFIC

TODAY WITH THESE 3
PAID AD SERVICES



CREATE THE PERFECT

MAGNET
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THE 5 MOST
ESSENTIAL FACTORS TO

**RANKING ON
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Welcome To Our Magazine

Thanks for checking out our March 2016 issue of Dallas Media Magazine, your online marketing resource guide for small business. Each month we will be covering topics that resonate with local businesses just like yours.

Our goal is simple. We want to enable you to do big things online, and it all starts by breaking down the complexities of marketing your business online.

It doesn't matter if you're are just starting out, or an established business owner in your local community, you can always benefit from increasing your brand's visibility online.

To your Success,

Robert Corrotto
Editor

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

www.dallasmediacorp.com the leading small business marketing service in the Dallas area. We help small businesses connect with more customers online.

If you want to build your business, you need to market, it's that simple. But you can lose thousands of dollars if you don't know what you are doing. So we urge you to take action with some of the strategies we recommend.

For a more "hands off" approach, we offer affordable solutions and can deliver results. We hope you enjoy this issue of Dallas Media. Feel free to reach out to us anytime.



4 GREAT WAYS TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS WITH TWITTER

Is your company using Twitter to connect with customers? If not, you should be. There's no denying that Twitter is becoming more popular as a communication tool for companies – but that doesn't mean that many companies don't get it wrong. Having a Twitter account that feels impersonal or doesn't respond to customers in a timely manner is worse than not having an account at all.

If you're going to maintain a Twitter presence, then you have to be prepared to think about how – and when -- to use it. More and more, customers are expecting compassionate engagement from the companies they follow on social media. With that in mind, here are four great ways to market your business on Twitter.





At Your Service

PUT CUSTOMER SERVICE AT THE FOREFRONT

One of the biggest mistakes that companies large and small make on Twitter is ignoring customer service questions and complaints. It's important to remember that everybody who follows your company can see that you're not replying to questions if they take the time to look. Stellar customer service can do a lot to boost brand loyalty and your company's reputation.

The best customer service on Twitter is personal, meaning that someone monitors your account

on an ongoing basis and answers customers directly with @ Tweets. A good example of a big company who uses this strategy is airline Jet Blue. An examination of their Twitter feed shows that almost everything they Tweet is a direct reply to a customer.

While responding to customers is better than not responding, beware of responses that seem cold or impersonal. Some companies try to keep customer service off Twitter by redirecting people who post questions or complaints to call their customer service number.

You're far more likely to engage customers – and keep them in the long run – if you embrace the idea that Twitter is an ideal platform to provide great customer service.

PROVIDE VALUE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

You might already know that Twitter is not the best place to be bombarding customers with sales pitches. You already know that the people who follow you are interested in what you have to offer, but the most successful companies on Twitter know that sending out a stream of self-promoting Tweets isn't a good idea. Instead, they find ways to provide valuable content to their customers.

Let's look at some hypothetical examples. A local pizza parlor might Tweet out fun facts about pizza, or even tips for reheating the perfect slice the next day. A clothing boutique might Tweet pictures of people wearing the clothes they sell. A dentist might link back to articles on her blog about tooth whitening or dental cleanings.

What all of these examples have in common is that their intention is to share information that is relevant and valuable to the customer. Sharing valuable content makes the people who follow you on social media feel a sense of obligation, which in turn triggers a cognitive bias known as reciprocity. In other words, giving your followers something for free can do far more for your marketing than overtly trying to sell them on your services.

OPEN A DIALOGUE WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

One mistake that a lot of companies make is to forget about the "social" in social media. People follow their favorite brands on sites like Twitter because they want to engage in some kind of communication with them. That doesn't mean that they want to be your friend, necessarily, but they do welcome the idea of friendly and thoughtful communication.

Let's talk about some ways to do that. One technique that can be helpful for local businesses is to re-Tweet chosen messages from their followers. You can use a tool like Social Mention to monitor social media activity and find out when your brand is mentioned. When a customer says something positive or memorable about you on Twitter, re-Tweet it. It's a good way of showing customers that you're paying attention to them.

Another option is to ask your followers a question. If you do it right, this can actually be a subtle form of customer research. For example, you might ask your followers a question about how they use your product, or why

WIN



they like it. If you offer an array of products, ask which one is their favorite and why. Alternatively, you could ask an open-ended question. For example, a local restaurant could Tweet “What’s for dinner tonight?” and include a link back to their menu. Yes, the menu is a sales pitch – but it’s a subtle one. If you decide to try this method, make sure to answer the Tweets you get in response.

HOST A CONTEST OR GIVEAWAY

Another clever way of using Twitter to promote your business is to use it to get the word out about a contest or giveaway. Everybody loves the idea of being able to win a contest or get a free product, and Twitter’s an ideal platform to promote such a thing. A contest has the benefit of adding value to customers while also providing you with an easy way to broaden your reach.

One way to get the most out of a Twitter contest is to ask users to re-Tweet the information about the contest in order to enter. Using this method actually wraps several of the other tips in this article, as well. For example, a contest is a good way to add value for customers, and to engage with them directly. Sponsoring a contest is an effective way to find out how many of your followers are truly engaged with your brand, and asking customers to share your Tweet about the

contest may help gain you some new followers too.

The bottom line is that Twitter can be an incredibly effective marketing tool if you know how to use it. The keys are to respond directly to customer questions and complaints instead of avoiding them, and to remember that the people who follow you are people, not machines. They don’t want to be hit with a constant barrage of sales pitches. What they want is something that feels like personal engagement and compassion. If you can do that, then Twitter can be a strong part of your marketing mix.



CREATE THE PERFECT **MAGNET** **FOR YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS**



Every local business should have a mailing list to use for email marketing. However, convincing people to sign up for your list may be a challenge. Most people get dozens of marketing emails each day, and some are reluctant to add yet another email to the mix.

The question, then, is how you can convince potential customers who visit your site to sign up for your mailing list. One common answer is creating something called a lead magnet – a freebie that entices people to type their email address into your opt-in box.



WHAT IS A LEAD MAGNET?

In case you are unfamiliar with the term, let's start with a quick explanation of what a lead magnet is. A lead magnet is a free item that you offer to new leads if they sign up for your mailing list. It's called a magnet because companies often advertise the lead magnet as a way of getting people to visit their site. In other words, it attracts customers the way a magnet attracts metal. Once they are on the site, they learn that all they have to do to get the lead magnet is sign up for your mailing list.

A lead magnet can be almost anything you want it to be, but the best options for local businesses are digital items that can be immediately downloaded after the customer opts in. You want the process to be as easy as possible.

WHY YOU NEED A LEAD MAGNET

Maybe you don't have a mailing list and you're wondering why you need one. Local business owners sometimes neglect email marketing as a resource because they think it's a waste of money. However, the fact is that email marketing is still one of the most effective – and most affordable – forms of internet

marketing. Here are some reasons that using a lead magnet to build your list makes sense:

1. Email marketing offers a low-cost, easy way to stay in touch with your customers on an ongoing way.
2. Email marketing is incredibly versatile. Here are just a few ideas of ways you might use email marketing:
 - a. To announce new products – for example, you might make a short unboxing or how-to video for a new product in your store.
 - b. To share valuable information with your customers – one of the best uses of email marketing is providing value to your customers, which creates a sense of obligation.
 - c. To offer enticements to get customers to visit your store – examples include promotions, coupons, and special events.
 - d. To encourage customers to spread the word about your business – if you make a point of offering worthwhile information, some of your customers will share your email with their friends and family, thus increasing your reach.

3. Using a lead magnet helps you encourage a particular cognitive bias – sort of a mental glitch – known as reciprocity. Most human beings feel a need to return the favor when they get something free. Offering a lead magnet makes your customers feel a sense of obligation to you because they know you've given them something valuable without charging them a dime. Once they have accepted a freebie from you, they are more likely to become paying customers than they would be otherwise.

As you can see, there are some significant benefits to using a lead magnet to help grow your email list.

HOW TO CREATE AN IRRESISTIBLE LEAD MAGNET

Deciding you want a lead magnet for your website is the first step. The second is deciding what form the lead magnet will take, and then creating it. Let's start by talking about some good options for lead magnets.

1. Remember that digital products that are available for immediate download are the

best choice. Don't make your customers wait to get their freebie – give it to them right away.

2. One common option for a lead magnet is a short eBook. Did you know that the average length of non-fiction books on the Kindle bestseller list is only 10,000 words? But in this case, a free ebook can be even shorter – sometimes 2,500 or 3,500 words is plenty.
3. Another popular choice for a lead magnet is a tip sheet or hack sheet. It seems like you can't go anywhere on the internet these days without coming across a list of hacks for everything from household chores to organizing your desk at work. People seem to love them, and creating a good hack sheet doesn't take long.
4. One of the most popular strategies is giving subscribers a special discount or exclusive offer on your products or services.
5. A video or series of videos is another option. Product demonstrations and training, how-to videos, Q & A videos. Behind the scenes (customers love this!) and anything your audience will appreciate. Just don't be salesy, provide value to your audience and the sales will follow.





Now let's talk about how to create your lead magnet. If you have a business that lends itself to tips and hacks – for example, the owner of a kitchen supply store might do well to offer a list of cooking hacks (or kitchen storage hacks) to potential customers – then that's a good way to go because it doesn't take long to create.

If the majority of your customers are looking for information, then writing a short eBook might be the answer. Don't get intimidated by the thought of writing a book. If you feel you can't do it yourself, you can always hire a freelance writer to do it for you. Just brainstorm some potential topics for a book, keeping in mind that you want things that are going to be compelling and interesting to your potential customers. For example, a sports equipment store might offer a short eBook about how to prepare for ski season, or a buying guide for parents whose kids are signing up for the local soccer league.

The key with any lead magnet is to think about what your customers want, what are their pain points? Then to find a way to give them solutions. When you start, it might be helpful to think about your target customers and who they are. After that, you can reach out with some social media advertising to let people know about your awesome new lead magnet and why they need to get it.

Lead magnets are an effective and inexpensive way to help you build a mailing list – which you can then use to attract new customers and grow your business. As long as you focus on providing value with your lead magnet, and target your audience wisely, you should have no difficulty attracting potential customers for your business.



GET TRAFFIC TODAY WITH THESE 3 PAID AD SERVICES

Choosing which paid ad services to use for your online advertising can feel like a crapshoot. There are so many options available, and the pressure to pick the right one – especially when you have a limited advertising budget – is enormous. As a small business owner, you don't have money to burn. That means that you need to try to maximize your ROI right from the beginning.

The type of business you own has a lot to do with which advertising platform you pick. However, there are a few that perform well for local businesses regardless of what they do. Here are the three top services to use if you want to increase your traffic today.

1: FACEBOOK LOCAL AWARENESS ADS

Facebook is the largest social media site, and its users have a very high level of engagement, with many of them visiting the site multiple times each day. You probably already have a Facebook page, but if you're not also using some of Facebook's paid advertising options for local businesses, you're missing out on some concrete and affordable ways to attract new customers to your website.

While social media offers an easy way to reach out to users wherever they live, local businesses need to be able to focus their advertising on the people who are most likely to turn into customers. Facebook Local Awareness Ads are a great way to do that. To run one, all you need is a Facebook page for your business that includes your street address. Facebook will take care of the targeting based on your zip code. Of course,

you'll need to write a good ad and include a compelling image – but after you do that, Facebook offers an array of ways to engage with customers using their call to action buttons:

- » Message Now is a button that lets customers send a private message right to your inbox, which can be great if you want to encourage questions.
- » Call Now is a button that allows mobile users to call your business with the click of a button. It's a very important feature to consider if you feel that the majority of your customers are accessing social media on their mobile devices.
- » Get Directions lets customers get interactive directions to your business using their mobile devices.
- » Learn More will redirect customers to the page of your choice on your website, allowing you to share valuable information with them or encourage them to sign up for your list.

All of the above options can help increase traffic to your site. Because Facebook ads are pay-per-click, you get the benefit of exposure because many customers who see your ad might not click it. It might be tempting to think that a customer who doesn't click is one who found the ad to be ineffective, but remember – many customers need more than one engagement with a brand before they make a purchase. A customer who sees your ad several times over the course of a month may walk into your store one day without ever having clicked your ad.



2: GOOGLE DISPLAY NETWORK

The second ad option to consider is the Google Display Network. Google AdWords is still very popular, but ranking for search can be difficult. If your site isn't already near the top of the list of search results for your chosen keywords, Google Display Network makes a nice alternative to AdWords.

The Google Display Network is a broad network of Google properties and third party sites that display ads purchased by Google advertisers. For example, instead of appearing on Google's list of search results, your ad might show up on Gmail, YouTube, or any one of thousands of third party sites. You don't

have to worry about ranking for search for your ad to display, which makes it a practical option for start-up companies or those with a lot of local competition that make winning an AdWords auction a tricky proposition.

One nice thing about the Google Display Network is that you can use it for traditional advertising or remarketing. If you notice that your website has a high bounce rate, then remarketing might be the right option for you – and using the Google Display Network gives you the opportunity to reach people who abandon shopping carts or fail to opt-in on a wide variety of sites.



BING SEARCH ADS

The usage of Microsoft search engine Bing still lags behind Google, but that can be a very good thing when it comes to advertising local businesses. Bing's traffic isn't as high as Google, but it's high enough to make it worthwhile. Because it's smaller, the prices to bid on keywords tend to be more affordable than they are on Google, which can put popular keywords in range for small companies.

One way to weed out some of the competition when it comes to keywords is to focus on local keywords when you place your ads. For example, it's going to be a lot easier to rank for a long-tail keyword like "Emergency Veterinary Care Seattle" than to rank for "Emergency Veterinary Care." If you use the latter, you'll be competing against thousands of veterinary practices worldwide. If you

use the former, you'll only have to deal with the veterinary practices that are in your immediate area.

Another fact about Bing advertising that's often overlooked is the fact that Microsoft also owns two other search engines, Yahoo and AOL. While their market share has slipped thanks to the rise of Google, a lot of people still use them. When you pay to advertise with Bing, your ads will display on AOL and Yahoo, too.

One final thing to consider about Bing is that they offer easy import of your information from Google AdWords – a nice option if you have been using AdWords and want to switch. They offer very similar targeting options to Google, and often at lower prices.

Other good advertising options for local business include social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest, as well as mobile marketing if you want to attract mobile traffic to your site. However, the three options listed above have the greatest probability of getting you the web traffic you want to see as a result of your advertising.



THE 5 MOST ESSENTIAL FACTORS TO RANKING ON THE FIRST PAGE OF GOOGLE IN 2016



Where does your business appear on Google when potential customers search for your chosen keywords? If you're not at the top – or near the top – it can be a devastating blow to your business. You know by now that very few users venture beyond the first page of results when they do a Google search. In fact, they're more likely to refine their search than to move on to the next page.

Fortunately, there are quite a few things you can do to help your website rank on the first page in 2016. Here are the top five.

#1: WORRY MORE ABOUT AUTHORITY THAN KEYWORDS

It's still important to use keywords in your web content, but the days when high keyword density was the key to ranking on Google are long gone. In fact, your keyword placement is not nearly as important as the overall authority of your site. Google's algorithms are very sophisticated, and they no longer rely on keywords in a title or H1 tag to determine if a page is worth visiting. Rather, they focus on contextual meaning and look for expected words to rank pages.

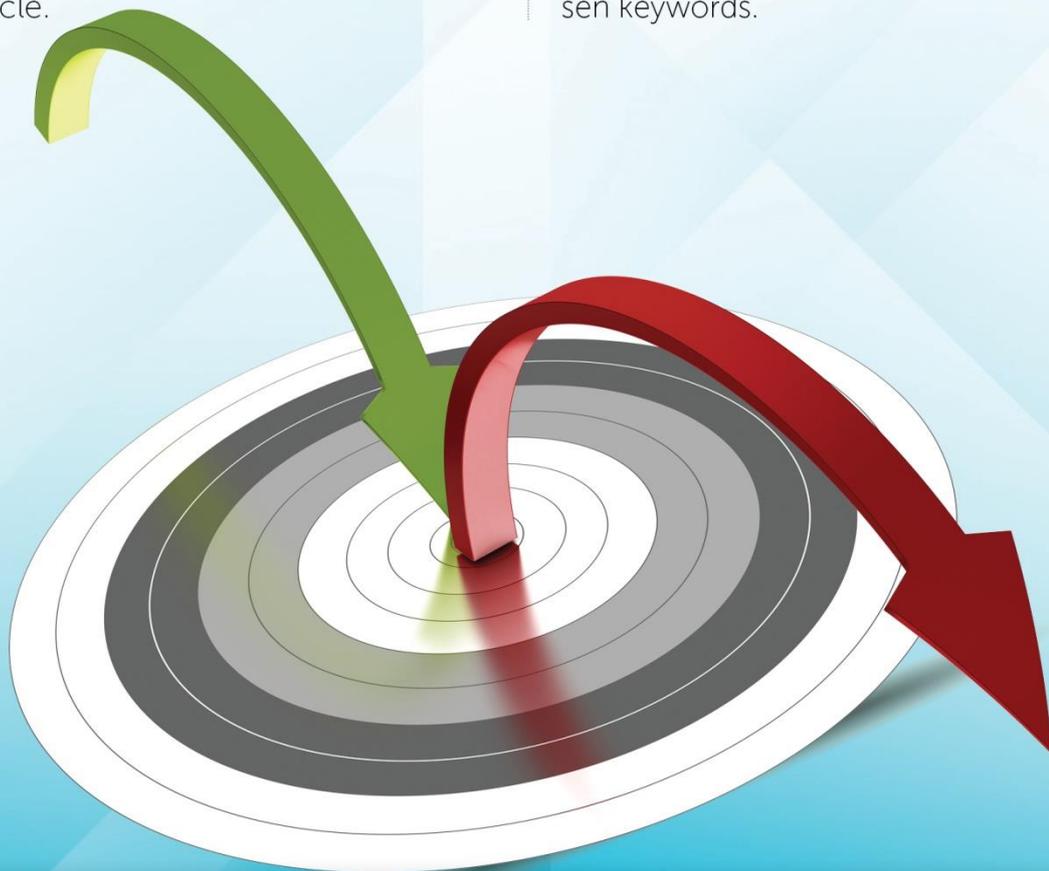
For example, it used to be that if you wanted to rank for a keyword such as "Best Legal Services" you'd have to use that keyword three or four times in strategic places to have a chance of ranking. Now, if you talk about competent legal representation, Google can tell that your page is relevant to the keyword even if you don't use it more than a couple of times in your article.

#2: PAY ATTENTION TO BOUNCE RATES AND THE TIME SPENT ON YOUR PAGE

Another surprising SEO development for 2016 has to do with an evaluation of whether your page is providing visitors with what they need. In addition to crawling your page for keywords and context, Google also pays attention to what people do after they leave your page as a way of determining if your page is an authoritative one or a waste of time.

For example, if a visitor searches one of your keywords and clicks on your page, Google looks at how long they stay. A visit of several minutes might indicate that a user is engaged with the content on your page and has found what they want. However, if they spend several minutes on your site, return to their list of search results via the dreaded back button, and click on another site instead, it's a good sign that your site did not offer what they needed.

If you have a high bounce rate, a good way to improve your search ranking in 2016 is to make sure that your site provides the answers to the questions implied by your chosen keywords.



#3: OPTIMIZE YOUR WEBSITE FOR MOBILE USERS

In 2015, mobile searches on Google outpaced computer searches – and that trend is likely to continue. Google has placed a great deal of importance on mobile search as evidenced by their Mobilegeddon mobile-friendly update in early 2015. If your site isn't mobile friendly, now is the time to get on board.

Fortunately, most businesses can switch to mobile-friendly or (ideally) mobile-adaptive sites with little trouble. Sometimes it's as simple as switching the template you use for your site. For example, if you have a WordPress site, they have a huge library of templates available, many of which are mobile-adaptive. You may have to do some fine-tuning of your site to make a new template work, but it's worth the work to get it done.

The beauty of mobile-adaptive sites is that they work by configuring to the specific mobile device being used. Mobile customers tend to be an impatient bunch, and they are unlikely to wait for a slow-loading page or scroll horizontally to read your content. If you take the time to optimize your site for mobile users, it can do more than anything else to improve your search ranking in 2016.

#4: STAY AWAY FROM CONTENT THAT'S TOO SHORT

It wasn't that long ago that blog posts of 250 to 500 words were considered the norm. Short and snappy was the rule of the day, and the assumption that people wanted short content led to a glut of short articles that were light on value and meaning.

That has all changed. Truthfully, the trend toward lengthy web content has been happening for a while, but this year it has really become the rule rather than the exception. Research shows that web users are far more likely to engage with content that's in the 1,000-1,500 word range than with short articles. Why? Because they want valuable information, and – with rare exception – it's



hard to convey that in just a few hundred words. Of course you can offer a top 10 list that's only 500 words long, but you're not going to be able to explain why items are on the list as well as you would if you wrote a longer article or blog post.

The reason that Google is placing so much emphasis on length is that they want to make sure they are sending people to pages designed for humans, not search algorithms. If you're worried about publishing long content, remember that you can make it more readable by breaking it up with subheadings and images.

#5: MAKE SURE THE USER EXPERIENCE IS FRONT AND CENTER

In a way, this last point is a summary of everything that has come before it. Each one of the above points comes back to one thing: user experience. Old-school SEO focused on tricking Google's algorithms – to the point where many websites were far friendlier to computers than they were to human beings. More and more, Google is concerned about ensuring that their search results are leading users to sites that answer their questions. They want users to feel good about the search experience,

something that's unlikely to happen if they end up on a site that's not mobile friendly, or is packed with keywords but contains no real value.

There are many things you can do to test the user experience on your site, including split-testing individual components on your page. However, the best thing you can do is to do what you can to answer key questions that are implied by your chosen keywords, and make sure that your site is easily viewable by any user, on any device.

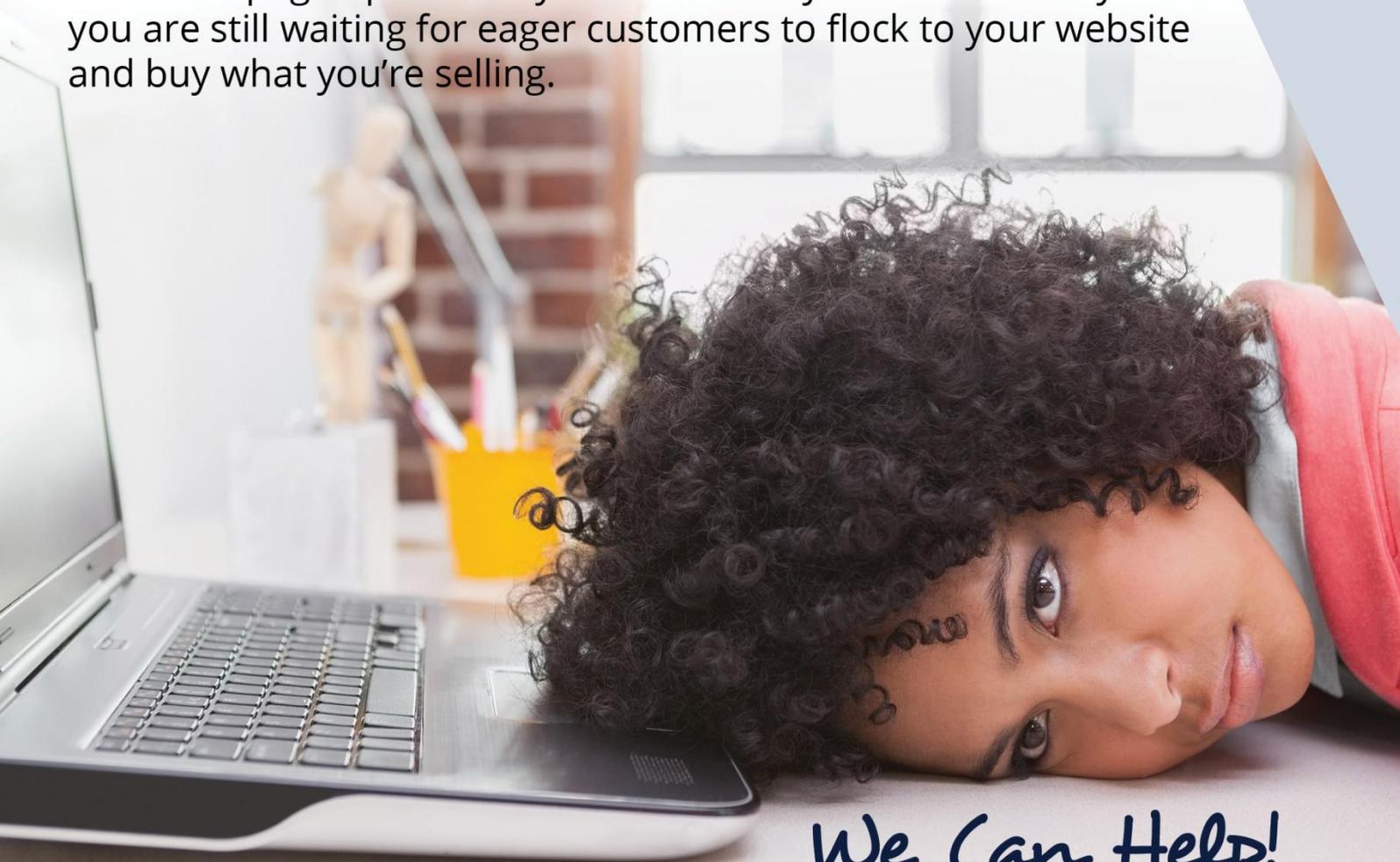


Ranking on the first page of Google is always a challenge. Regardless of your niche, you will be facing some fierce competition. It might sound odd to say this, but the best way to rank is to forget about trying to rank. Don't worry about algorithms and SEO tricks. Instead, focus on making your site a place where potential customers can find exactly what they need. If you do that, the search rank will follow.

Confused About How to Get **MORE PEOPLE** **TO VISIT YOUR WEBSITE?**

IT CAN BE SO FRUSTRATING!

You spend a fortune on building your website, and getting a Facebook page up.... Then you wait... And you wait! Monthly later you are still waiting for eager customers to flock to your website and buy what you're selling.



We Can Help!

We work with businesses just like yours and help them generate more sales every day and we can do it for you too.

Give us a call today, and let's have a friendly - no obligation chat about your goals. We'll set you up with a free marketing plan that's based on your goals. Follow the plan, and you'll increase your sales - Guaranteed!

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