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30 Ways to promote your website

Now that your web site is up and running, you need to let people know that it is out there. There are many ways you can promote your site. Following is a quick list, with further explanations below:

- 1. Directories and search engines**
- 2. Optimization**
- 3. Directories relating to your business**
- 4. Regional directories**
- 5. Online classifieds**
- 6. Press releases & announcement services**
- 7. Business cards & other marketing items**
- 8. Letterhead & other mail**
- 9. Newspapers, etc.**
- 10. Signs, yellow pages, etc.**
- 11. Company car**
- 12. Membership directories**
- 13. Articles**
- 14. Banner exchange**
- 15. Paid advertising**
- 16. Reciprocal links**
- 17. Forums, newsgroups and bulletin boards**
- 18. Publish newsletter**
- 19. Provide a free service**
- 20. Bookmark your site**
- 21. Recommend this site button**
- 22. Targetted e-zine ads**
- 23. Website maintenance**
- 24. Word of mouth**
- 25. Merchant listings**
- 26. Ebay auction merchant**
- 27. Social Bookmarking Sites**
- 28. Virtual shopping malls**
- 29. Blogs**
- 30. Join a marketing forum**



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- 1. List your site in directories and search engines:** There are different types: some are free, some are "pay per click" (where you bid on keyword phrases to get top positions) and some are "paid inclusion" (there is a cost for submitting). Some free search engines will expedite your submission or give you preferred listings if you pay a fee. WebStar Designs and Digital Photography provides submission services which include monthly ranking reports. We are experienced in SE optimization for the free search engines, and can assist you in designing a pay-per-click campaign to fit your business and budget.
- 2. Optimization:** Part of every search engine submission strategy should be optimization. A well optimized page will rank higher when a search is performed for that particular keyword phrase. Try to think of appropriate keyword phrases – what do you think your potential clients will type into a search box when searching for a business like yours? Try to think of phrases that describes your product and location (if applicable) as well. A well thought out phrase will bring more traffic to your site than a very broad keyword. For example, if you're a realtor in the Comox Valley you'll probably want to go for a phrase such as "Comox Valley realtors" or "Comox Valley real estate". You don't really want to try to compete with all the realtors in the world by trying to optimize for a broad keyword such as "realtor" or "real estate". This would cost too much in optimization, and isn't specific enough for what you do. The trick to getting the best return for your money is to find your "niche" – keyword phrases that don't have a lot of competition for optimization but are still searched by potential clients.
- 3. Directories relating to your business:** Submit to online directories for your particular type of business. I.e. if you have a B&B you'd try to find directories that are specific to accommodations.
- 4. Regional directories:** Submit to local online directories for the Comox Valley, Vancouver Island, BC or Canada. WebStar Designs has a list of these directories to submit to and is constantly updating this list to bring you the best coverage. We have also started submissions for the 100 domains business directory to increase your link popularity with search engines such as Google via cross promotion and linking.
- 5. Online Classifieds:** Submit to local online classified ads such as spendingless.com or [BC Classified.com](http://BCClassified.com) (make sure you include your URL!)
- 6. Press releases & announcement services:** Announce your site: write a press release for local newspapers, or check out announcement services on the web such as <http://www.seekon.com/L/CAN/BC/Courtenay/board.html>. For online press releases check out these sites: <http://www.free-press-release.com> or <http://www.emediawire.com>



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7. **Business cards & other marketing items:** Include your URL in all your marketing items – business cards, booklets, catalogues, brochures or flyers, and billboards. This will attract customers to your site to learn more about your business and your products.
8. **Letterhead & other mail:** Include your URL on your letterhead, fax cover sheets, invoices, statements, and every email you send out (even non-business ones).
9. **Newspapers, etc.:** Advertise your URL in newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, internet etc.
10. **Signs, yellow pages, etc.:** Advertise your URL on signs, bus benches and the yellow pages.
11. **Company car:** Paint or add stickers of your URL on your company car.
12. **Membership directories:** Make sure your URL is listed in any membership directories of any business organization that you belong to.
13. **Articles:** Contribute articles to newsletters or to websites– If you are an expert in your field, you could contribute to a relevant newsletter. Most will give you publicity by stating your URL together with your article in the newsletter. People that are interested in finding out more can then visit your site. Find relevant sites and e-newsletters – write letters to the editor that gets published. Check out these links to start your search: <http://new-list.com/> or for ezine directories: http://directory.google.com/Top/News/Magazines_and_E-zines/E-zines/Directories/
14. **Banner Exchange** – WebStar Designs can create a banner for your site which can then be exchanged with other sites in banner exchange programs. Make sure that it is a targeted campaign, not just any link exchange or you may be penalized by some search engines.
15. **Paid Advertising:** Buy banners or advertising spots on popular web sites. You can check the site's Google page rank or Alexa ranking to find out how popular they are. Again, choose links that are related to your site to get more targeted traffic.
16. **Request reciprocal links** – although this may take a lot of time, you can get a lot of traffic to your site from other sites with similar information as your site. Search for sites with similar interests and offer to link to their site if they will add a link to your site. Just remember that a small number of high quality links are better than a lot of low quality ones. You want to make sure that by adding a link, you are providing a service to your website visitor. A lot of irrelevant links may actually hurt your rankings as a search engine may lower your ranking because of it. Always ask yourself if adding a link to another site will add to your site's credibility, provide a good service to your visitors, and of course doesn't compete with your business!



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17. **Forums, newsgroups and bulletin board on the Internet** – find newsgroups and bulletin boards that match the subject on your website and post your website. It is important not to post to irrelevant newsgroups as you could annoy the members of that group. Don't overly push your product but subtly let potential customers know your URL by using it in your signature at the end of your email message. <http://www.boardreader.com> is a search forum which can help you get started in finding appropriate forums, or simply do a search for forums of your interest in Google or another search engine.
18. **Publish your own newsletter** – if you have the time, you can offer a periodic newsletter with valuable information for your visitors. This way you keep in touch with your visitors and attract them back to your site.
19. **Provide a free service** – By offering something for free, you can attract a lot of visitors to your site. For example you could offer free tips and advice, a free sample of your product, or have a contest or draw. By making your site "sticky" you'll keep your visitors coming back and keep you in mind, so that the next time they need something that your site offers, they'll think of you first.
20. **Ask visitors to bookmark your site** – WebStar Designs can add a "bookmark this site" button to your website to make it easy for visitors to keep your URL in their bookmarks list and ensure that they will not lose your URL and keep coming back.
21. **Recommend this site button** – Add a "recommend this site" script that makes it easy for a visitor to recommend your site to a friend or acquaintance, by clicking a button. Even if they don't click it now, the presence of this button may give them the idea to tell someone who might be interested in your site, where otherwise they may just browse for themselves. (You're basically asking them "do you know someone who would like to see our site?")
22. **Targeted ezine ads:** Advertise in e-zines and e-mail newsletters – make sure you choose ones that target the customer base that you are looking for.
23. **Website maintenance:** Update your site frequently and give people a reason to check back often. Have different online promotions, give a "tip of the week" or publish an article of interest periodically.
24. **Word of mouth:** Tell all your friends. (And hopefully they'll tell their friends, etc. etc.). I consider this to be one of the best forms of advertising. Also make sure that you run a trustworthy business with honest practices, quality work, and provide the best customer service possible to keep your customers happy and you may be pleasantly surprised by the new customers you'll receive via your happy customer's recommendations.
25. **Merchant listings:** If you are a merchant selling online, you'll want to get your site listed in the free merchant listing of Google Products <http://www.google.com/products>, try Dealtime <http://www.dealtime.com>, or get listed for free in PriceSCAN <http://www.pricescan.com>



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26. **Ebay auction merchant account:** Another strategy to try is to become an ebay.com auction merchant. With this you get to set up an "about me" page which can drive traffic to your site. So even if you don't sell a lot of items on the auction, you still get cheap advertising to drive targeted traffic to your site.
27. **Social Bookmarking Sites:** Other sites that may be of interest are <http://delicious.com>, <http://www.stumbleupon.com>, <http://www.digg.com>
28. **Virtual Shopping Malls:** join virtual shopping mall such as <http://www.openup.com>
29. **Blogs:** start writing your own blog (an online journal where you add links and postings, with the latest posting appearing at the top of the page.). Visit <http://www.blogscanada.ca/resources.aspx> for lots of information on blogging.
30. **Join a marketing forum:** Joining a forum that is dedicated to marketing (online and offline) can be a great way to ask questions and get advice. You can find out what has worked for others and keep up to date on the latest ideas.

****Remember: the best campaign is a broad, multi-faceted one** where you're not putting all of your eggs in one basket. Make sure you have traffic coming from many different sources – if one source disappears, you'll still have the rest.

****Another point to keep in mind - not really "promotion", but very important so I'd like to mention it here - is to establish a sense of TRUST in your site.** You want your visitors to feel comfortable on your site, and want them to feel secure in being able to do business with you. Adding a portfolio, testimonials, and a privacy statement can add a sense of trust.

****Tip:** You may want to create a separate email address for some of your promotional campaigns to combat spam.

**-- WebStar Designs can help you with all your web marketing needs. --
Why not [contact us](#), or give us a call today!**

Disclaimer: WebStar Designs has compiled this list to assist you in getting the most out of your site. We do not suggest that all of these tips will be right for your site. It is up to you to decide what will work the best for you. Prices and links may change without notice. We hold no responsibility for any inaccuracies in this list.