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Introduction

Many business owners think that online marketing involves setting up a website and waiting for the traffic to roll in, but things aren't that simple.

In order for your website to really work for you, it needs to have a comprehensive marketing plan in place. That doesn't mean you need to spend thousands of dollars on an ad agency! You can easily do everything yourself.

In this report, I'm going to let you in on some of the things you can do to make the most of your company's website. You're going to learn how to use your website properly, how to use your online presence to stay in touch with current customers and develop loyalty, while also bring in new customers, and how to get more traffic to your website.

So let's get started, shall we?

Your Website

A lot of businesses spend thousands of dollars to have a website built, thinking it needs all sorts of bells and whistles, but the fact is, most businesses do NOT need a complex and expensive website.

Most businesses need nothing more than a 1-5 page website that tells people a little bit about their company and products, offers contact information, collects visitor details, and perhaps offers coupons or other incentives.

You'll need to be certain your website is optimized for search engines. Just make sure you have phrases that relate to your business in page titles and content.

It should also be professional and attractive so you can let potential customers know that your company can be trusted. If your website is poorly put together, it will give the impression that your company is shady.

Don't use Flash! Websites should be done in HTML/CSS, but Flash should be reserved only for minor visual elements. You want your site to be compatible in every browser!

Getting Traffic

Once you have a simple, attractive website online, it's time to start getting traffic to it. Most of your traffic will probably come from search engines, so you'll want to make sure you have important keywords in your page titles and content.

Let's say your company is an Italian restaurant in Madison, Wisconsin. Some potential keywords might be:

- Italian restaurant Madison Wisconsin
- Italian food Madison Wisconsin
- Italian restaurants in Madison
- Italian food in Madison

Those are just a few of the keywords you might want to use to help people find your site in the search engines. You'll also want to make sure your site shows up when someone searches for the name of your business, so you'll have to craft your page titles carefully.

An example for a page title might be:

Luigi's Italian Restaurant – Delicious Italian Food in Madison, Wisconsin

This way you would have your company's name (Luigi's), along with several keyword phrases (Italian restaurant, Italian food, and Madison, Wisconsin) in your title.

You would also want to make sure that those same keyword phrases appeared in the content of the page itself. For this reason, you want to be sure your pages are mostly text rather than images or Flash.

Local SEO

I have already told you about general SEO practices such as using keywords in your page titles and content, but there is another aspect to getting local businesses traffic from the search engines.

Google (the number one search engine in the world) displays local results before standard listings, and you have to submit your business to their local business search specifically or your company won't appear there.

Take a look at this result from Google:



italian food madison wisconsin

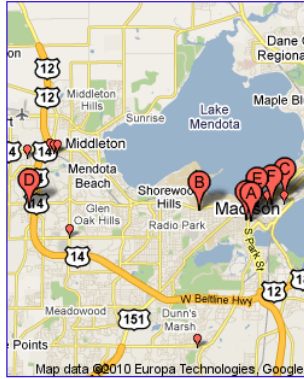
Search

[Advanced Search](#)

Web [Show options...](#)

Results 1 - 10 of about 1,410,000 for **italian food madison wisconsin**. (0.22 seconds) #

Local business results for **italian food near Madison, WI**



- A [Fraboni's Italian Specialties](#)
frabonisdeli.com - (608) 256-0546 - [3 reviews](#)
 - B [Lombardino's Restaurant](#)
www.lombardinos.com - (608) 238-1922 - [39 reviews](#)
 - C [Bellini Italian Restaurant](#)
www.bellinirestaurant.com - (608) 250-0097 - [16 reviews](#)
 - D [Biaggi's Ristorante Italiano](#)
www.biaggis.com - (608) 664-9288 - [26 reviews](#)
 - E [Porta Bella](#)
www.portabellarestaurant.biz - (608) 256-3186 - [27 reviews](#)
 - F [Tutto Pasta Cucina Italiana](#)
www.tuttopastacucina.com - (608) 250-9000 - [12 reviews](#)
 - G [Green Bush Bar](#)
www.madisonatoz.com - (608) 257-2874 - [39 reviews](#)
- [More results near Madison, WI >](#)

Sponsored Links

- [Madison Italian Food](#)
Find Directions to Any Location in **Madison**. Get There with MapQuest.
MapQuest.com
- [Madison Italian Restaurant](#)
Find Local Business Listings Right in the Search Results on Bing.com
www.bing.com/Local
- [See your ad here >](#)

[Madison WI Restaurants and Dining Guide, Blog, Reviews, Food ...](#) ☆

No place loves their fish fries more than **Madison and Wisconsin**. So we take Spotlight on Chef Rod Ladson of Johnny's **Italian** Steakhouse ...
www.madisondining.com/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

[Porta Bella Restaurant](#) ☆

Located in **Madison Wisconsin**, Porta Bella **Italian** Restaurant is known for its pasta, homemade **Italian** dinners, pizzas, steaks and seafood.
www.portabellarestaurant.biz/ - [Cached](#) - [Similar](#)

As you can see in the image, there are seven listings for Italian restaurants in Madison, Wisconsin BEFORE the actual standard search results. These are the "local business results".

If you want your business to appear in these results, you have to submit your business using this form:

<http://www.google.com/local/add>

Directories

Another thing you will notice when you search for local businesses is that a lot of directories usually show up. For example, for my search "Italian food Madison Wisconsin", I see SuperPages.com, local.Yahoo.com, and MagicYellow.com, as well as a local directory called MadisonDining.com.

Since these sites all appear on the first page, you would definitely want to make sure your business was listed in all of them.

Always do a search for the top keywords for your business and make sure you get your company listed in every directory that shows up in the first two or three pages of results.

Social Marketing

Many companies think social marketing wouldn't benefit them, and sometimes that's true. But if your major demographic happens to be under 40, social marketing is potentially a fantastic tool.

Facebook and Twitter are both great for keeping in touch with your customers. Set up a fan page on Facebook and get your

company a Twitter account. Then start adding friends by searching for people in your local area.

Offline Marketing

You can also promote your website offline. Your local newspaper, magazines, radio ads, bulletin boards, and other similar sources are all great places to advertise your website.

Don't forget to tell your existing customers about your website, too. Some business owners don't understand why they should be sending existing customers to their website if the purpose of the website is to get new customers, but in the next chapter, I'll let you know exactly why this is a VERY good idea!

Building a List

It's important not only to get new customers, but also to keep existing ones loyal and happy. By building an email list, you can keep in touch with both current and potential customers, reminding them of the presence of your business, and hopefully to shop with you again!

This means you need to get potential customers on your list, but also as many of your current customers as possible. You can have flyers, stickers, or business cards with your web address on them that you give to every customer who buys something from you. Make sure to point out that you will email special offers, announcements about new products or services and special events, and discounts and coupons from time to time.

Offering discounts and coupons to your email list will keep them loyal and shopping with your company instead of your competitors!

Try <http://www.aweber.com> for easily setting up and managing an email list.

Conclusion

Marketing your business online is a lot simpler than most business owners believe. All you need is a simple website, a little initiative, and a few hours to get everything set up.

You can literally have your entire marketing system online and in place in just a few hours, and it will be more effective than you ever expected!

Here's a checklist you can use to get started:

- ✓ Get a simple website online. 1-5 pages is usually plenty.
- ✓ Submit your site to Google's Local Business search.
- ✓ Be sure to include keywords in page titles and content.
- ✓ Submit your site to local and national directories.
- ✓ Use Facebook and Twitter.
- ✓ Build and manage an email list.