

U R G E N T R E P O R T



**11 DEADLY
INTERNET SINS
for Local Businesses**

Dear Local Business Owner,

Want to know exactly why your current online marketing campaign is not getting the response you thought it would?

Want to learn how to turn your Internet marketing efforts into more leads, sales, phone calls and appointment month after month?... Even though the majority of local business owners are struggling to produce just one new client each month from the Internet.

Well with each day that passes, local businesses who currently have little or no foundation online continue to stack the odds against themselves as their competition is pulling farther and farther away from them in the Internet game.

This report on the 11 Deadly Internet Sins for Local Businesses is the perfect way to help you close in on your competition and truly dominate your market... so lets get started.

1. Thinking Your Target Market is "EVERYONE" -- This is #1 on the list because avoiding this one Ginormous marketing sin will absolutely have a huge impact on all of your marketing efforts, both online and offline. Understanding who your best target market is will help you break the one habit that is guaranteed to make you spend a ton of money on advertising with very little return -- trying to please everyone.

When your target market is everyone, its difficult to craft a single message to please all of those people because it isn't "personal enough" and doesn't relate well enough with those you really want to serve. So the questions now are "Who do you want to serve? and Who is your ideal client or customer?"

Ever heard of Pareto's Law? It's all about the idea of the 80/20 Rule which means, in this case, that 80% of your business comes from 20% of your clients and the other 20% of your business comes from the 80% of people, customers, clients, patients, etc who waste a lot of your valuable time but don't spend a lot of money for your services.

Well the goal here is to craft a strong message that speaks **directly** to the 20% that's going to bring you 80% of your business. Forget about the other 20% right now. They simply aren't worth your time. Focus your time and online efforts on pleasing your best target market. Once you develop a strong campaign for your business's most important group of prospects and customers, then you can start working on another campaign that is focused on your second, most important target market.

A great way to understand who your perfect target market is for your business is to create something called a "client avatar." Think about who your ideal client is and specifically what their pains and frustrations are, what their demographics are, what kind of clothes they wear, what kind of car they drive, where they live, where they get their information on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, what kind of language and thinking habits do they have, etc., so you can then craft a personal message that speaks directly to this group's pain points time and time again in each one of your marketing messages .

2. Website Doesn't Have A Clear, Concise Goal -- Question: What is the one thing that you want someone who lands on your business website to do? Do you want them to call your business to schedule an appointment so they can come in and see you? Do you want your website visitor to enter their name, email and any other pertinent information that you may need into a web form so you can hit them with your offer or offers through email marketing? Or is it to have someone purchase a product or service from your website right then and there?

Once you figure out what you want your website visitors to do when they land on your website, you will be able to set up all the components of your website so that they are inline with your website's goal.

Important: do not try to incorporate more than one goal on your website. If you do this, you will confuse your website visitors and they will hit the back button on their browser and guess where they're going to go next? You guessed it... your competitor's website which means you have lost that prospect forever. Make it easy on your website visitors to take action by giving them only one call-to-action

3. Lacking Social Proof -- Here's the deal: too many people have been burned in the past from promises that businesses made to them that haven't turned out the way they had hoped. Well, because of all of these big promises with very few companies actually delivering exactly what they preached, *the consumer has become skeptical.*

It's no longer the days of just stating on our websites or any marketing piece for that matter that we're the best in the industry and you should call us because we said so. We now must leverage social proof which helps your prospects begin to believe you really can help them solve their problem.

By far the most powerful form of social proof is testimonials, but there must be a plan when it comes to gathering and posting testimonials for your local business. First, do your best to get testimonials about the different aspects of your business rather than just one part of your business. Also look to gather testimonials in different types of forms... Video is the most powerful without a doubt, but the written testimonials still pack a solid punch that you can leverage in your online sales funnel.

Always remember that people like to do business with people they know, like and trust and if your prospects see other people having success with your products or services, they will automatically feel like you can help them with their issues.

4. Ignoring Proven Local Online Traffic Sources -- If you haven't claimed your local maps listings on the 3 major search engines (Google, Bing and Yahoo), then you are absolutely leaving FREE money on the table. The truth of the matter is each local business has essentially a free 'local' website on each of the major search engines that allows you to claim your spot in the local market and list your products and services, business hours, the areas your business serves, the categories your business falls into and what types of payments your business accepts.

In addition, you can upload photos and videos that help describe and promote your business and you can even setup up coupons and special offers to entice targeted prospects to do business with you, all for free!

Other proven local online traffic sources are local directories like YP.com and MerchantCircle.com. There are literally 100's of local directories that any local business can and should take advantage of.

Tip: Be sure to properly optimize each one of your directory listings so your business shows up ahead of all of your competitors when people are searching for your specific products or services.

5. Follow Up Is Weak -- This is a biggie and typically gets put on the back burner by businesses left and right. The great thing about the Internet and follow up is the web allows you to automate much of the process with tools like email autoresponder systems, automated webinars and even mobile SMS text message campaigns. Once set up, these tools can automate much of your sales funnel allowing you, the business owner, to have a lot more time to focus on the stuff you need to focus on, like running and growing your business.

Setting up a simple email follow up system that hits your prospects on a daily, weekly or monthly basis is a perfect example of "*working smarter, not harder.*" And this makes even more sense now since it typically takes 10+ touches for a prospect to make a buying decision.

So, if you're currently reaching out to your interested prospects once or twice after you first come in contact with them hoping they come back your way for business, then right now may be the perfect time to incorporate a simple, yet powerful 24/7 follow up mechanism that does a lot of the heavy lifting (selling) for you. Remember, "*work smarter, not harder.*"

6. Clueless About What's Happening In Your Market Online -- If you want to leverage the Internet to get more leads, sales and customers, then you must have a strong pulse on your market online. What does that mean exactly?

Two words: Keywords and Competitors.

First, you must know the keywords your target market uses when they are searching for your product or service online. What do they type into

Google's search box? What type of lingo do they use when searching for things related to your business? And what does the search engine landscape look like on those particular keyword searches which means what types of results show on these specific searches?

Do the results reflect something similar as to what you would offer? Would it make sense to have your business website show up on specific searches?

Second, you must understand who your competitors are online. If you plan on marketing online with the idea of leveraging the Internet to produce more leads, sales and customers, then it would be in your best interest to understand who your competitors are online, what types of marketing strategies are they using, what is working for them, what isn't working for them, what keywords are they targeting and how their online sales funnel is structured.

When you understand these two key components about your market online, you will be able to create a plan for a successful online marketing campaign instead of just winging it. The latter usually doesn't pan out too well if you know what I mean.

7. Not Tracking Your Marketing -- Avoid this Deadly Internet Marketing Sin at ALL Costs! Tracking is so vital to the overall success to any and all marketing efforts, especially online. When you incorporate a simple tool like Google Analytics in order to gather data about how people are finding your website, how long they are staying on your website and what pages they are visiting on your website, you can use this data to identify trends and adjust accordingly.

If the goal of your website is to have your website visitors call your place of business to schedule an appointment, it would probably be in your best interest to use a trackable phone number so you can see the phone activity that your website and other Internet marketing strategies are actually producing.

The information gathered from campaign tracking is so valuable because it helps give you an idea of what to do next, where to make adjustments, how

to optimize your Internet marketing campaigns and potentially stop the bleeding of your ad dollars.

8. Weak Content -- Weak, generic, boring content is not going to get anyone excited about what your local business has to offer. Actually it can have a huge negative impact on your online marketing efforts in the following two ways.

Your website visitors won't be excited about the information that is on your website and, equally important, the search engines will not give your website priority in the search engine rankings because it looks just like everyone else in your market and doesn't offer anything unique.

The most valuable content is unique, high quality, relevant content in the form of text, videos, audios, images, that gives a lot of 'value' to your target audience. Your content is there to serve your specific market, so give them something that they can implement right away with success and force them to remember you and your business as the go-to resource in your niche.

A good guideline in producing website content is making sure your web pages have a minimum of 500 words and blog posts are a minimum of 250 words. If you can generate content that's longer than the minimums stated above, you will definitely appeal to the search engines better and naturally boost your website rankings.

Some powerful Internet strategies that will help you deliver high quality, unique, relevant content are: blogging, video marketing, social media posts, article marketing, reports, podcasts, social media, press releases and more.

Keep this in mind: Content is King. So when you're creating content, provide real value to your target audience... teach them something they previously didn't 'know, and give them something where they can see immediate results. This type of effort pays off big time in the long run and you will be remembered and thanked for it time and time again.

9. Lacking A Clear, Concise, Direct Call-To-Action -- Deadly Internet Marketing Sin #9 is not having clear, concise, direct calls-to-actions in your online marketing efforts.

You see, the thing is if you're gonna go through all of the trouble to building laser targeted online marketing campaigns that have the goal to help you get more leads, sales and customers, the worst thing you can do is not 'Ask' your target audience to do the exact thing you want them to do like: call now or enter your name and email in the form over here, etc.

Unfortunately in this marketing game, you must ask for what you want your website visitor to do, so they can get what they want and you get what you want. If you 'think' or 'assume' that your website visitors will do what you want them to do without you asking them to do it, you are living in la-la land.

Two Things You MUST Understand about incorporating a Strong Call-To-Action: (1) people are not as smart as you think they are -- you not have to tell them what to do, but you have to tell them how to do, and here is the key -- (2) tell them multiple times.

10. Your Marketing is BORING -- Does your marketing lack personality? This can be a big turnoff for the people you are trying to attract because, plain and simple, your marketing is not going to get noticed. Your stuff will look just like the majority of your competition out there. Not a good place to be.

Put yourself in your target market's shoes for a moment... what would grab your attention if you were searching for a business that provided the products or services that your business offers? What would help you stand out from the rest of the competition in your market?

Chances are if your marketing message and online approach is just like everyone else's in your market, then you're probably not going to be too excited over the dismal results of your campaign just like most of your competitors.

The thing is if most people are doing one thing in your market, you're probably gonna want to do the exact opposite and one way you can do the opposite of what your competitors are doing is by not being boring.

Infuse a concept called 'Personality-Driven Marketing' and you'll be well on your way to separating yourself from your competition and standing out and getting noticed by those who matter most to you -- your target market.

Some other ways to break out of the BORING train can be to use video and social media. Or create contests and incentives for people to interact with your business online. For example, if you are dentist, maybe you can start a monthly lottery for free teeth whitening. This type of approach will attract people to your website even if they don't need your services at that exact moment which allows you to build relationships and possibly get referrals.

11. You Have No Online Marketing Plan In Place -- The ultimate deadly Internet marketing sin of all. Don't get me wrong, the Internet can be a daunting place for many reasons, but that doesn't mean not having an Internet marketing plan for your local business is acceptable, especially today.

Read this closely: The Internet is Not Going Anywhere Anytime Soon, so this means that if you own, run or work for a local business and there is no Internet marketing plan in place or there isn't one currently being built, then its time to get started.

So lets go over the areas that must be covered in your Internet marketing plan:

Traffic Generation Strategies: There must be strategies in place that drive a steady flow of traffic to your website(s) and other online properties. Some great approaches are Search Engine Optimization, Pay Per Click Advertising, Video Marketing, Local Maps and Local Directories. Most importantly with all of these traffic generating strategies, good target keywords must be properly researched and selected so you can target the right keywords instead of the wrong ones.

Converting Traffic -- Setting up your website and other online properties to convert traffic to your most wanted response. (Remember, it's either phone calls, lead forms filled out or a purchase on your website).

Follow Up -- Just like I stated before, follow up is huge. What does your follow up look like? What types of information do you want to give your prospects and how will get that information across to them?

Staying Involved in the Community -- The search engines have all recently changed how they value websites and businesses. They want to see businesses that not only have strong search engine attributes, but they also want to see businesses actually participate in the online community. Well what does that mean, right? It means getting involved in social media and having a strong social media plan. Build relationships with your target audience, get involved in the conversation. Your market will start to take notice and start to believe you are credible and you like to give great value to the community.

Tracking and Analytics -- Set up your tracking plan. Track your website activity with Google Analytics. Have a trackable phone number if you are after phone calls. Make it easy on yourself to see what's really going on with your Internet marketing campaigns.

Continued Testing and Optimization -- This is for any and all marketing campaigns -- current or new. It's very important to continue to test different strategies. For example, you may get a higher conversion rate when your website colors is red versus blue, or your font is size 14 rather than 12, or different images on your website that elicit different emotions from your website visitors. All of this stuff matters and to have a plan for continued testing is essential especially when it comes to marketing online.

Well there you have it... the *11 Deadly Internet Sins for Local Businesses*. Ignore these at your own risk. If you're serious about creating a rock-solid Internet presence for your local business, then do yourself a favor and take this report to heart. ***It may save your business in the long run.***