

Local marketing online: Reaching customers in your area

The Internet is global but it can also be local. Smaller businesses can capture more customers by targeting Internet users seeking information about goods and services in their area.

Here are some tips to help you get started with a local marketing campaign on the Internet.

Claim your listing on Google Places

Google displays a map with company listings when people search for a local business. Google Places listings are free and claiming yours increases your visibility on the Internet. That makes this an essential step for any locally focused business. Simply go to Google Places and follow the prompts.

List your business in local directories

Almost every area has online directories in which your business can appear. Do an Internet search for business directories in your area and add your company to the lists.

In the Pontiac we have our own business directory. Check it out at www.commercepontiac.ca

Join foursquare's merchant platform

Foursquare is a location-based social networking site for mobile devices where users share their location with friends and find businesses. By joining the merchant platform, you ensure your business appears when users check in to your location. The platform also enables you to offer specials — a good way to attract new customers.

Establish a presence on Facebook

Facebook is all about creating and fostering relationships, and can be a means of reaching potential new customers as part of local marketing campaign. When you create a Facebook page with your business profile, you can choose to be featured as a local business. One of the benefits of Facebook is that every time someone becomes a fan of your page all of their friends are notified. Make sure your page has a professional look and offers engaging content that reflects your business's culture and values.

Participate in local blogs and Internet forums

Increase your visibility by leaving comments or writing guest articles on local blogs and Internet forums. Be sure your signature includes your contact information and website address.

Also, be active in online communities, such as LinkedIn and Quora — a question-and-answer website edited by its members. This way, you will position yourself as an expert adviser in your field.

Gain exposure on local websites

Forging relationships with other organizations, such as local charities, professional associations and media can gain you local Internet exposure when they post news about your business with a link to your website.

Make it easy for local customers to find you on the Internet

If you want your website to appear near the top of the list when local users search online for your type

of business, you should choose keywords that describe your unique offering and geographic location. Use these keywords in your URL and in the text of your pages. And don't forget your website is the cornerstone of your marketing strategy. Make sure your contact information appears on each of its pages.

Localize your pay-per-click advertising

Most search engines offer the option to localize your pay-per-click Internet advertising. Zero in on the geographical area you want to target and reach your intended audience.

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Summer reading for entrepreneurs

Forget everything you thought you knew about the way business is done. This summer's crop of books for entrepreneurs emphasizes new discoveries in neuroscience and behavioural science, which promise to turn conventional wisdom upside-down. The more we learn about how the brain works, the more we learn it holds its share of secrets for success.

Nothing Succeeds Like Failure

In *Imagine: How Creativity Works* (Penguin Canada/Allen Lane) the *New Yorker* magazine contributor Jonah Lehrer describes the improbable paths our brain takes to help us arrive at our most creative ideas. For instance, daydreaming works—MRI scans show our brains are busy, even when we appear to be doing nothing. On the other hand, brainstorming, which Lehrer refers to as “the most popular creativity technique of all time,” is a waste of time. Studies show we're better off working on our own before we pool ideas.

Entrepreneurs in tough times will be particularly encouraged by Lehrer's pep talk on how nothing succeeds like failure or at least impending failure. Whether it's an anecdote in *Imagine* about Bob Dylan, circa 1965, stumbling

onto the lyrics of “Like a Rolling Stone” just as he was about to give up music forever, or Proctor & Gamble's design team despairing about the inefficiency of the mop before coming up with the popular Swiffer product, our worst moments can inspire our best ideas.

Moments That Matter

The study of creativity takes a backseat to the study of routine in Charles Duhigg's *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* (Doubleday Canada). Duhigg, a business writer for the *New York Times*, gives us the bad, though hardly surprising, news first. We are creatures of habit. The good news is that new theories on human psychology suggest that while we may be stuck with our habits, we have the capacity to make them work for us.

The way individuals as well as companies can accomplish this, according to Duhigg, is by analyzing our behaviour and focusing on one thing we can change. This is what Duhigg calls “a keystone habit.” Working on “keystone habits” has a ripple effect. Other unproductive behaviours tend to change too. For all its reliance on research, *The Power of Habit* is replete with

Chamber Events

General Member Meeting

Thursday, September 27 – 6:30 pm

Pontiac Community Hall – Luskville

Guest Speakers:

Joanne Labadie – Lavender Ridge Farms

Don McCologan – Quyon Ferry

Both speakers will be talking about their businesses and the new changes coming.

Networking, information on upcoming events and updates on Chamber business.

More information to come – please check the Chamber web site for up-to-date information.

If you have a business or Pontiac event you would like advertised, please contact the chamber.

useful tips. For example, Duhigg's recommends that you prepare in writing for how you will handle difficult situations. This habit has not only proven effective in dealing with tough challenges but also in achieving goals.

The Land of Blah Blah Blah

There are limits to language, though, which is the point of Dan Roam's book *Blah Blah Blah: What to Do When Words Don't Work* (Portfolio/Penguin). According to Roam, a business consultant and the author of the bestseller, *The Back of the Napkin*, we have fallen into the bad habit of overcomplicating everything. We talk too much and say too little.

Of course, everyone doing business today knows what it's like to be stuck in “the land of blah blah blah” – with too many instructions to follow, too many power-point presentations to sleep through. Roam's solution: draw yourself a picture, literally. This worked when we were kids and Roam contends it can work again. Combining the verbal and the visual, *Blah Blah Blah* practices what it preaches,

... continued on page 2

introducing an innovative way of thinking simply and vividly about complicated things.

Unconventional Wisdom

Compiled by KPMG Enterprise, the anthology *That'll Never Work: Business Lessons from Successful Canadian Entrepreneurs* (Portfolio/Penguin) is short on breakthrough research, but it makes up for it with common sense advice and a belief in the power of unconventional wisdom. What the entrepreneurs in this book have in common is that they were all advised against doing what they would eventually succeed at.

In the words of Benoit La Salle, CEO of SEMAFO, a Montreal-based gold mining company: "When people tell me an idea won't work, I know I'm on to something."

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Pontiac Buy Local Program

The first Pontiac Chamber Coupon Book has been distributed to residents and cottagers throughout select Pontiac regions. There are coupons from many local businesses – offering discounts to encourage shoppers to Buy Local.

The Chamber encourages everyone to support the local businesses – to use the discounts offered to discover the various products and services available in the Pontiac. Support your local community!

The Chamber would like to thank all business owners who participated in this project!

Next year the Chamber plans to expand the program Pontiac wide.

Welcome to the Chamber!

Businesses who have joined the chamber since the last newsletter.

- Art Brûlant
- F. Filion
- Irony Graphyx
- Patti's This & That
- Petro T
- Pharmacie Julie Jones

Check the chamber web site for links to these businesses.

Support your local businesses!

News, article suggestions and letters to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. Content will be edited to fit the space available. We welcome press releases and news from our local business community.

Chamber Benefits

Being a member of the Pontiac Chamber of Commerce means that you are also affiliated with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (CCC) — www.chamber.ca and the Quebec Chamber of Commerce (FCCQ) — www.fccq.ca. You and your business can take advantage of benefits listed on their web sites.



Group Insurance Benefits

Visit the new web site / view the video!

<http://www.chambers.ca>

Would Like to Join the Chamber?

Membership fee of \$100 entitles you to all chamber benefits. Membership valid from April 1st to March 31st.

Contact info:

Pontiac Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 119
Campbell's Bay, Quebec, J0X 1K0
1-866-861-0509 or 819-647-2312
www.pontiacchamberofcommerce.ca
info@pontiacchamberofcommerce.ca

If you received this newsletter via regular mail and would like to receive it via email, please let us know a valid email address. We do not share our lists.

Advertising with the Online Business Directory

All businesses try to find the best, most cost effective way to advertise their products and services to the public or other business owners. The Pontiac Business Directory is one way to do this. The directory ranks very high on search engines when anyone is looking for products and services in the Pontiac region.

This directory was created to be updated by the businesses themselves so new information can be added to your listings at any

time as your business changes and you offer new products or services.

If you would like information about the directory, please contact lynda@freshimage.ca. The online Help File is there to step you through the process. If you have not already claimed your business' listing, we can step you through the process.

Visit the directory at:
www.commercepontiac.ca

Think Global ... Buy Local
Support Those Who Support You
Small Businesses Make Small Towns Work!
 Consider this when you're buying ...
 As business operators, our actions shape our communities.