

# Thriving after the Google Slap



## Making Google Happy

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*How to set up your web site to survive; even thrive,  
with every change Google will ever make!*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Google is the most important potential web marketing partner on the web. Recent estimates put 1 of every 2 searches performed using the mighty Google. All search, all the time, that's Google's motto. They are truly the 900 lb Gorilla at the party being held on the World Wide Web.

Not long ago, Google applied for patent protection for their indexing algorithm. Applying for this patent acted literally as a double edged sword. On the one hand, Google was awarded protection for their world changing technology. On the other, the patent application revealed many of the "secrets" to the inner workings of Google.

In this patent application, Google laid out many of the "rules" they use to determine which results it will return.

According to [SEOMoz](#):

Google is employing many new systems of spam detection and prevention according to the patent. These include:

- Watching for sites that rise in the rankings too quickly
- Watching for registration information, IP addresses, name servers, hosts, etc that are on a "black list"
- Growth of off-topic links
- Speed of link gain
- Percentage of similar anchor text
- Topic/Subject shifts or additions

In other words, Google is on high alert to catch those who want to manipulate the system.

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It's essential to understand that effectively "manipulating" the Google "system" can make one very, very wealthy in a very, very short period of time, so when Google applied for their patent, hundreds of thousands of people FLOCKED to see the secrets contained within, hoping to find clues on how to "crack" the code and gain a top ranking with the search engine giant.

Then, a few months after the patent application, Google issued the now famous "Google Slap" where they made sweeping changes to how they calculated the "Quality Score" for a web site. (We'll talk more about Quality Scores later.)

A lot of people who were using Google Adwords discovered that their 5 and 10 cent keywords were inactivated and instead of paying less than a quarter per click discovered the asking price for these keywords had escalated to \$5.00 or even \$10.00 per click.

It was truly a shot heard around the world. The cries of the afflicted were broadcast loud and clear. Overnight, Google went from being many internet business owners best friend to their most worthy adversary.

I'm going to share with you my internet marketing strategy, a strategy which has been helped by the recent "Google Slap." I'm going to share with you not only the "whys" behind not only this strategy, but also why I believe this strategy will serve you better than ANY of the current "hype" available today.

If you're looking for a way to make \$200K+ from home without working, this is NOT for you.

If you are frustrated following the "crowd" and the Google Slap was the last straw for you, read on.

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## **2. BUILDING AN EMPIRE ON THE POWER OF FREE**

If Google is your favorite way to find site on the web, then you might forget that Google is actually a multi BILLION dollar business. As a business, they are selling a variety of products, of which the premier product is AD WORDS, where web site owners pay for their “ad” to appear on the search results pages.

While Google is the BIG DOG in the world of search, they haven’t always been the 900 lb gorilla of the internet. While Ad Words is a source of Google’s massive income, in the beginning Google was simply a search engine. As a search engine, it was Google’s job to index and catalog the internet. Google began generating “buzz” way back in the late 1990’s, long before they had a real "product" to sell.

Now, if you weren’t using the internet 10 years ago, then you probably don’t remember that there actually was a time, when not only dinosaurs roamed the planet but also people surfed the internet without the help of Google or even, the 900 LB INTERNET GORILLA of the 1990’s..... Yahoo!.

There was a time, long ago, when surfing the net was a marvelously random experience. You would happen upon a site put up by a fellow netizen (as most of the surfers in those days were also web page creators) and follow the links that web master put on his/her page to direct you to other pages. In those days, as part of the internet community, it was your “job” to include links to other interesting sites on your page. If your site was interesting enough, then others would link to YOUR web page.

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Even back in those days, there were “search engines” that attempted to index the content of the internet, but the process was clunky to say the least. Web page creators would type “keywords” across the bottom of the page to get listed on one of the keywords. In other words, it was very easy to “fool” the early search engine spiders which made the results they provided very, very unreliable. These were the days when any search could bring up hundreds of unrelated porn sites and every time you clicked on a search results, you braced for what you might see.

This is how the internet worked when Stanford graduate students Jerry Yang and David Filo created a website named "Jerry's Guide to the World Wide Web" in January of 1994. “Jerry's Guide to the World Wide Web” was a directory of other web sites, organized in a hierarchy, as opposed to a searchable index of pages. Its ease of use by end users combined by its SUPERIOR results made it an overnight smash success.

You see, Yahoo! was a DIRECTORY and not a SEARCH ENGINE. The difference being, a search engine would send out programs to scan and index the web automatically. These programs were easily “fooled”. Yahoo!, on the other hand, had HUMAN editors who were not easily fooled. While they provided significantly fewer results, the quality of the search results were vastly improved. When using Yahoo!, one didn't have to worry what a search for “leather purses” might turn up. People took note and by the end of the first year, the site had received 1 million hits. The founders, recognizing the potential of such traffic, formed a corporation.

During the late 1990's, the “major” players in the search game were Yahoo!, MSN, Lycos and Excite. Of these, Yahoo! led the pack because of the HUMANS behind the wheel of the directory. Yet, it didn't take long for Yahoo! to become overwhelmed by the exponential growth of this new medium.

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## **3. ENTER THE GIANT: GOOGLE.**

Google began as a research project in January 1996 by Larry Page and Sergey Brin, two Ph.D. students at (again) Stanford University. By this time, Yahoo! was well known and the struggle to get listed in the “premier” directory was well known. It could take months for Yahoo! to include a web site in their directory.

Page and Brin hypothesized that a search engine (one which didn’t rely upon humans) that analyzed the relationships between websites would produce better results than existing techniques, which essentially ranked results according to the number of times the search term appeared on a page. Their search engine was originally nicknamed, "BackRub" because the system checked backlinks to estimate a site's importance.

Page and Brin still remembered the “good old days” when a great page got lots of links from other web sites, as web masters tried to direct readers to the best the web had to offer.

The Google search engine attracted a loyal following among the growing number of Internet users, who liked its simplicity combined with its ability to deliver complete and relevant search results. By the year 2000, Google signed a contract with Yahoo! to supplement Yahoo!’s directory with Google results because Yahoo!’s humans could not compete with Google’s “bots”.

Google really began to develop a following when singles began using the resource to “check up” on potential dating partners. When Suzie Q Public went to Google and typed in her new boyfriend’s name, she got back an incredible WEALTH of information on her new boyfriend. The press picked up on the phenomenon and reported upon it, which introduced the search engine to the rest of the world.

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Because singles got such GREAT useable information on potential partners, they then began going to Google to get other information, such as where to find the hottest swim suits or what site offered music lyrics. When Google gave the public the results they were asking for, instead of a bunch of unrelated garbage (or an incredibly short list compiled by mere human editors), Google became a favorite destination as a primary way to find information on the information highway.

The reason people began using Google is when they used Google to search, they got the information for which they were seeking.

**Search engines weren't new, but Google found a way to create a search engine which delivered the results HUMAN BEINGS wanted to see!**

So in the beginning, if you created a site that was rich in keyword content, AND had lots of links to other sites (which is how people got around on the internet way back in the 90's.... surfing from one hyperlink to another) Google would return your site favorably.

What that meant is that if you had a site that focused on music lyrics and the term "music lyrics" appeared over and over in your pages, AND other music aficionados linked to your site, your site got a better Google ranking under the keywords "music lyrics" than a site that only used the word once and had no backlinks. After all, that was the insurance Google wanted to make sure that your page would deliver EXACTLY what people were searching for when they used the search engine.

While Google was launched in 1996, it didn't begin trying to make money immediately. Instead, Google focused on building an audience. One way Google began to earn money was to partner with Yahoo! Another way they began earning money was by launching their Ad Words program.

It's important to note that Google didn't invent pay per click. Overture had already beaten Google to the pay per click concept, but Google

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approached the market with an already captive audience, their OWN captive audience. First doesn't always win the race, especially on the internet.

In 2004, Google began offering FREE web based email, (much like Yahoo! had done with great success) except, when Google began offering email, they used it as yet another place to deliver their advertiser's ads.

The key to Google's success is their "captive" audience. Google used to post proud signs proclaiming the actual number it had served--like McDonald's (NYSE:MCD) with hamburgers--until that figure became too impossibly large to keep track of with any kind of reliability. They estimate the number of searches that are performed daily is in the neighborhood of 200 MILLION. That's a LOT of eyeballs in front of which to place advertising.

This massive and captive audience is a fickle group. There have been recent rumblings that users don't see any difference between the quality of Google's search results and those found on Yahoo!.

***This information is vital to help you lean how to avoid the NEXT GOOGLE SLAP!***

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## **5. GOOGLE'S CUSTOMER DEFINED:**

Google's business model, which has been incredibly successful, is based on an "upside down" theory so to speak. Instead of following the "Golden Rule" where he who has the gold, makes the rules, Google has instead decided to focus upon the other side of the equation.

To illustrate the "Golden Rule" business mentality, let's take a look at the internet auction giant, eBay. It's common knowledge at eBay, that the sellers are the ones eBay is structured to pamper and protect. At eBay, sellers are assigned varying "ranks" which afford more and more privileges based upon the number of auctions they have run. Auction buyers at eBay who have had problems with a transaction learn quickly that eBay's loyalties lie squarely with the sellers. After all, the sellers pay the fees which keep the internet auction giant's profits rolling in. Buyers are just a small part of the equation.

However, Google has taken a different approach. This approach has proven to be confusing to many of the people who use Google AdWords. Many Google AdWords customers believe Google should be catering TO THEM! After all, they're the ones paying the bills.

But Google has taken a different approach. Instead of catering to the advertisers, Google instead is catering to the "customer" end of the equation.

While eBay defines their "customers" as the sellers of goods on the auction site, Google defines their "customers" as those who use Google for search, instead of those who pay for access to those customers.

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## THIS IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT:

While eBay defines its “customer” as the seller of goods, Google defines their “customer” as the BUYER of the goods. Google’s goal has always been quality results for their “customers” who are defined as the people who use Google for search.

Google has been VERY transparent this issue and on what they want to see.

Google wants to see *ORIGINAL CONTENT WRITTEN TO APPEAL TO HUMAN READERS.*

Google’s Adwords campaign is allowing YOU, the business owner access to the hundreds of millions of searches being performed daily on Google.

By assigning web pages a “quality score”, Google is ensuring the BEST possible results for those they have defined as their customers.

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## 5. DANCING WITH GOOGLE

Our brief history lesson offers quite a few clues into how to play nicely with Google. When you begin to view the world through Google's eyes you'll get a better view of why the search engine giant does the things that it does.

You can see that:

- 1) Yahoo! gained dominance by providing results that HUMAN BEINGS wanted to see.
- 2) Yahoo! lost their premier position because they were unable to add quality results to their directory quickly enough.
- 3) Google took over the number one position by creating an automated search engine which gave better results.
- 4) Google monetized (or made money) from all of those eyeballs by creating a product: Adwords.
- 5) Yahoo! is poised waiting to retake their role as "king" of the internet jungle known as search, as are others.

While Ad Words is a source of Google's massive income, in the beginning Google was simply a search engine. As a search engine, it was Google's job to index and catalog the internet.

Slowly, but surely, another factor began coming into play with Google. I discovered it in the spring of 2006. As a resident of southeastern Florida, I began researching whether to purchase a gasoline or diesel generator on Google. Being in the web business, I noticed that each and every "natural" search engine result returned was at least 8 years old. A couple of the results of natural search were 10 years old. Yet, the Ad Word links on the right hand of my screen were all fresh new sites.

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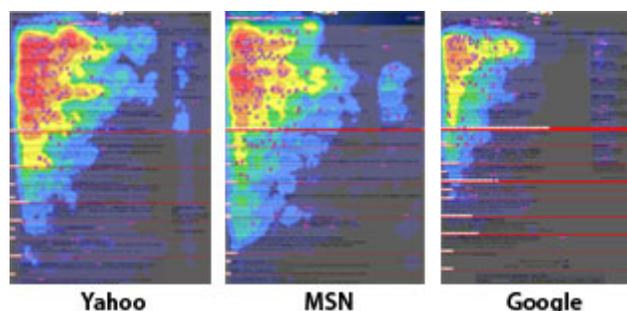
Now, remember Google makes their money selling AD WORDS! So, if I click on “natural results” on the left hand side of the page, Google doesn’t make any money.

When I clicked on the results on the “right hand” side of the page, I got web sites with a lot of “sell” but little information I needed to make my purchase. When I clicked on the results on the LEFT HAND side of the page, the “natural” searches, I got a lot of GREAT information to help me decide which type of generator to purchase.

During my search, I clicked frequently on the “natural” search results in my search for a generator and generally ignored the “paid ads” to the right.

My search for information is not unique. If you pay attention to your use of Google, you’ll probably see that your experience mirrors my own. As a matter of fact, eye tracking studies confirm this phenomenon, not only in Google (where it is most severe) but also in Yahoo! and MSN search.

The image below illustrates the results. Each screen illustrates how web user eyes move when they are taken to the Search Engine Result Page. The areas in red are considered “hot” spots where the eye tends to spend most of the time. The black areas are where the eye never travels.



Want to learn more about the eye tracking studies?

<http://www.enquiro.com/research/eyetrackingreport.asp>

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As you can see, web users have learned that the “good stuff” is located in the natural or “free” search results.

Now, until the recent slap, Google was willing to allow Adwords advertisers to compete on a level playing field. Every one paid the same price, not matter what their content. That meant if you had a one page web site that was either a long sales letter or a “Squeeze” page, you paid the same for your ads on Google as did the web site owner with “quality” content. As long as you paid, Google allowed you to play on a level playing field.

The problem is that there were web site owners who were putting up one page web sites with very little “steak” but a lot of “sizzle. The creators of these sites were then writing compelling ads which drove lots of people to their one page web site.

Google users quickly learned that the QUALITY links were on the left hand side of the page, in the NATURAL results.

Now, looking at the content on the LEFT HAND side of the Google search results, one sees that not surprisingly, Google gives GREAT WEIGHT to the age of the page and the content. Basically, quality content is KING on the left hand side of the search engine results page.

The Google Slap is intended to balance the equation.

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## 6. CLOSING THE LOOPHOLE

What does this mean for your web site? First and foremost, it means you've got a long wait in store if you're going to wait for Google to naturally return your newly created pages high enough to make an impact on your site traffic. If you choose to buy Adwords though, your hard work will be rewarded by allowing you to spend less on your pay per click campaign than those who simply throw up a one page "squeeze page" type web site.

There has been a "loophole" that internet marketing information gurus have been touting for the past year or so: it's called the long tail.

See, for every highly searched term in Google's index, there are 10-20-30 or so not so highly searched terms. So while you'll invest a lot in your campaign to reach people interested in a broad and popular search term, there are dozens of terms with little or no competition.

For example: the keyword "marketing" has 160,888 searches over a one month period.

Meanwhile, the keyword phrase "small business marketing" had 6754 searches during that same month. See, more the more specific the keywords, the smaller the search results and the less "value" to an advertiser.

Compare "small businesses marketing" at 6754 searches with the term "aggressive marketing at international level" which had 33 searches during that same month.

Because "aggressive marketing at international level" is VERY specific, it has a limited number of searches. However, those very specific searches

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are being performed often enough for smart internet marketers to target for a relatively small sum. Say, .05 per click.

The advantage to this is twofold:

- a) You have less competition than on competitive keywords
- b) You know have THE EXACT INFORMATION the visitor is seeking.  
Therefore it is EASY for savvy marketers to simply create a single page, targeting THAT KEYWORD, and purchase Adwords for THAT KEYWORD ONLY.

Now remember, Google's rise to dominance began with offering a way to distinguish what HUMAN BEINGS want to see and they have done an EXCEPTIONAL job of performing that task for the left hand side or for the "natural" searches.

However, the GOOGLE SLAP is simply the beginning of the new game. In this game, the stakes have changed when it comes to the RIGHT HAND SIDE of the Google search engine results page.

Recent studies of user behavior of Google showed that internet users were increasingly IGNORING search results delivered via the right hand side of the page.

**REMEMBER: GOOGLE ONLY MAKES \$\$\$  
IF YOU CLICK AN ADVERTISER'S AD.**

News of this study rang out loud and clear across the internet. Link building "membership clubs" were launched, heralding the bargain of natural search engine placement.

The governing "gods" at Google could not have been pleased by such activities. They showed their displeasure by issuing the Google Slap.

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## 7. QUALITY SCORE AND KEYWORDS

The Quality Score is assigned by Google for a web site is a ranking, ranging from “great” to I assume “poor” (I personally have only seen “great” and “ok” in my experience.)

It’s important to note that your web site’s quality score is a DIRECT RESULT of the content contained on the web site.

I manage keywords for a site that gets a GREAT rating on some keywords, and an “OK” rating on others. The same content will be assigned a high Quality Score for some keywords and an average Quality Score on others. From what I’ve seen, the Quality Score is NOT merely a function of a certain keyword appearing frequently.

I’ve heard others hypothesize that Google’s algorithm includes keyword CLUSTERS. See, when the Googlebot “reads” the text, “The grass is always greener” it has to have some way of knowing if the page is REALLY talking about grass and lawn care, or is the page using this as a cliché. The way they sort through such complexities is by measuring how many times others “cluster” keywords are used.

Theoretically, in our example above if the text “The grass is always greener” appears in combination with the words “nitrogen” and “fertilizer”, then Google knows the page is talking lawn care.

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## 8. MAKING GOOGLE HAPPY

The Google Slap primarily affects keywords that were previously “selling” for less than .25 per click. Almost overwhelmingly, those affected had one page sales pages or squeeze pages and little else.

I’ve seen people who should know better who will tell you that Google isn’t interested in letting you know what makes them happy.

**BULL!**

Here it is, straight from the horse’s mouth:

*“Google has maintained a substantial lead in search quality for the past five years,” said a spokesperson, “and we are committed and focused on search to ensure Google continues to offer the best search experience available.”*

Google is interested in offering their customers the best search experience possible. They are NOT interested in allowing advertisers the ability to make the most money with the least possible investment of time or money.

Google isn’t revealing their “keyword clusters” and honestly, if you’re writing with humans in mind, you shouldn’t worry about which words are “clustered” together. The only reason you would need to know that “secret” were if you wanted to write a program to “cheat” Google. If you’re tempted by these program developer’s promises, just remember that it is Google’s goal to discover such ruses and eliminate them.

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**REMEMBER: GOOGLE'S RISE TO POWER HAS BEEN ON THEIR ABILITY TO DELIVER SEARCH RESULTS THAT HUMANS WANT TO SEE.**

According to [Wikipedia](#), "as of December, 2006, Google is the most used search engine on the web with a 50.8% market share, ahead of Yahoo! (23.6%) and Windows Live Search (8.4%).[36] Google indexes billions of Web pages, so that users can search for the information they desire, through the use of keywords and operators."

Google always has prided themselves on providing the information users desire. It's literally the foundation upon which Google is built.

Every time Google has "danced" (a term used by web developers and internet marketers when Google changes the way they index and rank sites) it has been to move in the direction of better results for visitors.

**Google is well aware of the fact that a mere 10 years ago it was Yahoo! who sat on the throne as king of the internet.**

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## **9. THE BANE OF DUPLICATE CONTENT:**

If you want high Google to assign a high Quality Score to your website, you need both quality and quantity of content.

One 'easy fix' being used by some marketers is to grab some free articles from one of the many article web sites and post them to your site.

The problem with that strategy is that Google is already ten steps ahead of you. They define such content as Duplicate Content. If your content is identical to content of numerous other pages, not only will it NOT show up in Google's organic search results, but it could also hurt your Quality Score.

Especially risky are programs that automatically “grab” syndicated content and have it appear “automatically” on your blog or web site.

My advice to you: if you adopt this strategy your web site or blog had better have some original content if you're going to please the minor deities at Google.

Google is all about content. Original, quality content.

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## 10. REALITY CHECK:

So how can you avoid being hurt by the next Google dance? How can you ENSURE that your business won't be crushed by the next shake up at Google?

- a) You'd better use a wider net to acquire customers.  
Google PLUS some other forms of advertising/marketing such as radio, television, newspaper. You know, it's the old "keeping too many eggs in one basket" theory.
- b) You'd better fill your web site with lots and lots of CONTENT! The days of the one page web site are gone forever. Make sure you've got RELEVANT content on your site and put up an XML site map so Google's spider knows about your content!

Remember, Google's job is to index web site content. Google has always liked "fresh" content (thus the Googlebot's love of blogs). Adding fresh content to your web site naturally means that, over time, you're going to have LOTS of pages to index on your web site.

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## **11. THE LONG TERM SOLUTION:**

The most recent “Google” dance isn’t the first and it won’t be the last.

When you look at where Google has been and where they are heading, Google is moving on a predictable course. They say their focus is upon providing the best search experience and their actions back up those words.

If you plan on “tricking” Google, then you must be prepared for your tricks to be discovered, shared and eventually used against you by the mighty Google.

If however you take another approach, then every dance Google does will bring your sites higher and higher in the search engine results.

## **12. TIPS FOR WRITING GREAT WEB CONTENT**

**You must remember that you are creating this website for the visitor!**

Your visitor is the reason you are creating this website. Your visitor is a busy person. He or she is here for ANSWERS.

By providing ANSWERS to the visitor’s question (which is always phrased Jeopardy style, in the form of an answer...thus the keyword) you’ll find that providing the “quality” content the Googlebot seeks is really quite simple to provide.

In order to design your site to meet visitor’s needs, you must first know who your visitor (or customer) is and the who, what, when where and how they got to your site.. Once you've determined the who, what, when and where, you can create your site with this unique person in mind.

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Armed with this information, you can now decide what information the customer needs to have about you. Visitors need LOTS of information to trust you with their contact information, let alone their credit card.

**Begin by targeting your web site content toward a specific audience.**

The internet is huge and it's possible that hundreds of thousands of people may visit your web site in a typical month. Trying to meet the needs of each visitor with one web site is nearly impossible.

That's why it pays to tightly target your audience. According to Bob Bly in the July 2003 issue of Entrepreneur Magazine, "You have a selling advantage and come across as believable when your sales materials are tightly targeted to specific audiences."

So instead of selling your wonderful widget to everyone, tightly target your web content and explain why organic farmers need your widget to increase profits and production!

**Be sure to focus on benefits not features.**

Features answer the "what" while benefits answer the "why". There's a HUGE difference between benefits and features. Benefits sell while features don't. Yet the biggest mistake web site owners make is in focusing on the "what" or feature of their product or service instead of the "why" or benefit of their product or service.

You may think you're selling candles via your web site, but think again. Candles are the "what" that you're selling. The "why" may range from covering up unpleasant odors to creating a romantic atmosphere or emergency preparedness.

**Target your content towards the people most likely to buy.**

Your best visitors already have a keen interest in your product or service

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and the financial resources to complete the sale. They are the ones who will buy most quickly.

## **Differentiate or Die!**

It sounds harsh, but it's the law of the internet jungle. Why should a customer buy from you and not from your competitor? "

## **Use testimonials.**

People might not believe your product or service can do what you say it will. You can overcome this disbelief by having a past or present customer praise you and your company. Testimonials are usually written in the customer's own words, are surrounded by quotation marks, and are attributed to the individual. They can be used in sales letters, brochures and advertisements.

The power of testimonials has been misused and abused, so leverage the advantage the internet provides. Instead of tightly worded "professionally written" testimonials, grab a video camera and get your customers on video singing your praises. Written testimonials can be faked and forged. It will take a highly skilled actor to deliver an authentic testimonial.

When you create a web site with the VISITOR in mind, and you'll never fear the Google Bot or the frequent dance that it performs.

Begin by tightly targeting your message. Your prospective customers have problems, and you are offering solutions. When you start focusing upon your customers and your solutions to their problems, you'll find creating compelling content that Google likes is a breeze. The added bonus is you'll discover your CUSTOMER list growing as well.

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## 13. REAL LIFE SOLUTIONS TO THE GOOGLE SLAP

Ken (not his real name) became a client of mine about 4 years ago. By that time, Ken was well on his way to building his own internet empire. He was doing 90% of it correctly. He had defined a target audience, a group of people whose problems he understood and he crafted a great solution. He wrote his content with his audience in mind, answering their problems with his own carefully crafted solutions. He used testimonials (both written and audio ones) and found an audience ready to buy.

Ken's only mistake was he built his empire on a network of 15 one page web sites.

Prior to the Google Slap, Ken was sailing along as happy as could be. His bank account was fat and he'd embarked upon an expensive kitchen remodel for his wife. Then, the Google Slap hit. Suddenly, Ken's sites had dropped off the map. It was as if they didn't exist anymore. Ken's Google Adwords bids went from .10 per click to \$10.00 per click overnight.

Ken called me in a panic.

We began by applying everything I'd learned over the past year about Google. (Unfortunately, 80% of what I learned about search marketing over the past 9 years is no longer valid, so I have to keep running to stay up with the game.) Fortunately for him, I am an active web master for my own business. I don't share "pie in the sky" theories but rather real insight into what works (and doesn't) on the web.

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In December of 2006, after more than 2 years of blood, sweat and tears, my first book was published titled [Beyond the Niche](#).

In May of 2006, my business coach encouraged me to launch a blog to promote my upcoming book. I have to admit, I only created the blog in the spirit of being a “good client”. I mean, I am FLUENT in html and I viewed blogs as the “beginners” way to publish content to the web.

Besides, I had created a web site YEARS ago, which I put up and forgot about, that was all about choosing your Niche Market. I realized that I had the PERFECT HTML web site already in place to promote my book.

<http://www.findmyniche.com>

So, tweaked it a bit a VIOLA! I had a three year old web site available to start promoting my book. PERFECT!

Even though I had my old established web site in place, [my coach](#) was pushing me to launch a blog. Remember, I know ALL about the Google sandbox, a place where Google places your web site, waiting to see if you are WORTHY of indexing.

So, I decided to launch a blog to promote my book in the spirit of “if a little is good, then a LOT is better.”

<http://www.beyondnichemarketing.com>

Well, in January, the blog site "broke out" of the Google sandbox and was indexed. I was ranked #9 on the search term "Niche Marketing Guru".

When I did a log file analysis, I saw the blog site was doing better in terms of visitors and book sales than my traditional HTML web site was doing.

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At that point, I got EXCITED about blogs. I mean, my three year old, Search Engine Friendly web site was being BLOWN AWAY by my new blog. I had more visitors to the blog, more incoming links AND more newsletter sign ups.

As I worked with my blog, I got more and more excited about this medium. The thing about the blog is, you can do MUCH more than just feature the written word. Here is a client who is using VIDEO in his blog:

<http://www.wholisticblog.com/>

Again, what's GREAT about the recent developments on the internet is your legal bribe doesn't HAVE to be the written word. Have a video clip (1-3 minutes) of you speaking to a group? We can use THAT as your legal bribe to get people to sign up for your newsletter. We can even use an audio clip if you'd like!

With this experience under my belt, when client Ken came to me, I knew EXACTLY what we needed to do.

We took the domain name that was pointing to Ken's least profitable one page web site and we launched a blog site there instead. The opening page of the blog site still features the same selling content that the one page web site featured BUT this time, it was featured in the blog setting.

A few posts later, Ken found his underperforming site rocketing to the top of the Google index on his favorite terms. In less than 6 weeks, Ken's least productive site went from zero to hero.

In the final analysis, I've seen over and over again blog style sites getting favorable treatment from Google.

However, don't assume like one client of mine did that merely installing the blog software will perform miracles. One client launched her blog and 6 weeks later wrote to ask why she wasn't number one on her desired

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(highly competitive) keywords. When I went to look at her blog, it turns out she had YET to make a single post.

Creating compelling content and featuring it on a blog will be a sure fire way to not only avoid “angering” the Google “gods” but is actually a way of endearing yourself to them. It makes sense. Google loves content and blogs are all about easily getting your content published on the web.

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## 14. OWN YOUR OWN BLOG

A blog is a great way to endear yourself to Google and the other search engines. However, launching a blog can be a terrifying experience for someone who is less than Internet Savvy.

That's why I've launched [Acumen Web Services](#). I've found other blog launch services that charge \$1500 and more creating exactly what we do: your own hosted blog. However, my heart has ALWAYS been with the bootstrapping entrepreneur so instead of charging \$1500 for blog set up, I pared that cost down to only \$595. Then, we came up with something truly different. See, the biggest problem you'll have with your own hosted blog is staying on top of the MANY updates to the blogging software.

See, the ability for you to go to a special web page and make posts to your blog makes it easy for you to add content, BUT it also makes it easy for "bad guys" to hijack your site as well. That means that the blogging software developers are CONSTANTLY plugging security holes in their software. In the first three months of 2007 alone, Word Press issued THREE security upgrades.

When you have an "insecure" version of blogging software installed, it means the bad guys can gain easy entrance to your site.

If there was ever a "downside" to having your own blog, this would be it.

So I created a system where we'll handle the ugly stuff about security upgrades so YOU can rest easy and focus on promoting your blog.

With the security and hosting issue handled, I believe I have created the PERFECT vehicle for promoting your business: one that will make Google happy now and for years to come.

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It is possible for you to get your feet wet in blogging by using a free service. However, remember the rewards from your blogging efforts will be seen by the blog site's owner, not you. The blog site's owner is the one who is getting hundreds of thousands of people to create unique content on their behalf.

I encourage my clients to use these free services as supplements to their own blogging strategy.

Time and time again, I've heard from DELIGHTED clients who aren't tech savvy but are reaping the benefits of the internet. One client wrote with delight that after only 3 months, a friend suggested she Google herself. She had been well warned about the Sandbox issues, so she was double delighted to see that, despite a VERY common name, she was listed number ONE in Google after only 3 months! Her friend's site was several years old and her friend STILL wasn't showing up in a Google search on her name!

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## 15. CONCLUSION

Content has always been king of the Information Highway. In their quest for world domination, Google has always been obsessed with creating mechanized programs that can detect good, original content. Their latest efforts have been labeled the “Google Slap” because anyone with content light web sites found themselves between a rock and a hard place very quickly.

The fastest, easiest way out of that quagmire is to launch the content friendly blog software on your site. I’ve seen it take several sites that had been slapped to zero and make them overnight heroes!

Free blogs are a nice supplement, but when you build your blog on a free site, you’re building content for the site owner, and not yourself.

Content remains the king and blogs are the makers of kings and queens! Understanding where Google has been will help you see that the love affair Google has with blogs isn’t going to end anytime soon.