

How To Build A Successful Online Business Directory.

Starting an online business directory can be pretty easy, but if you have no clue of where and how to start then by reading this article it will help you to get started.

Step One:

The first thing you need to know about starting a business directory online is what is your target market going to be, in other words what kind of businesses do you eventually want to include in your new business directory.

If you already have a current business online or offline then you will already know your target market, and you can move forward to step two in this article.

However, if you have no idea what your target market will be, then you will need to do some research, I would recommend starting a business directory about something popular and which is going to earn you an income down the road or.

That will gradually help grow your current business.

Here are some very popular and profitable niches for an online business directory you could start.

- 1: RealEstate Directory
- 2: Travel Directory
- 3: Online Dating Directory
- 4: Automotive Directory
- 5: Fashion Directory

There are so many more and to find them just go to Ebay.com or Amazon.com and see what is popular on those sites, or you could go to Google and do a search for keyword terms like "Hot Niches" or "Popular Niches" or "Popular Business" get the idea..

Then after you have decided on the niche for your new business directory, you will need to either buy or register your domain name.

Step Two:

Buying or registering the right domain name for your new online business directory will be the most important thing, so you need to make sure you get this correct from the start.

A good domain name should be no longer than two to three words, and it should contain the name of the niche and the word directory in it and should always be a .com if you can help it other wise you should go for the .net domain if the .com for the domain you want is already taken and is not for sale.

Therefore, for example if I was going to start a new business directory about the niche real estate the ideal domain name would be RealEstateDirectory.com or RealEstateDirectory.net but all good domain names like this have already been taken, but they may be up for sale so just visit the website and see.

If you find the domain name is not for sale then you could also try adding a dash between the two words.. Like this RealEstate-Directory.com or RealEstate-Directory.net and see if they have been taken or not, and if they are taken see if they are for sale.

If you have to go with a three word domain name you could enter something like your town or city name in front of the domain so it could be.. Like this NewYorkRealEstateDirectory.com or NewYorkRealEstateDirectory.net and see if it has been taken.

A great free online resource I have found to help brain storm a new domain name and see if they have been taken or not is RegistrarStats.com , give them a try.

Once you have found the domain name for your new online business directory it is time to register it, I recommend Godaddy.com for this as they are the cheapest and offer the best services.

Step Three:

Now that you have got your domain name for your new online business directory it is time to find a hosting company, and I have tried many and the best I have found is SeoHosting.com which is owned by HostGator.com, and they have been around for a very long time and they have thousands of happy customers.

Step Four:

Now that you have got your hosting account for your new online business directory it is time to build the directory.

Now you could do this a number of different ways but it all comes down to the amount of money you wish to spend.

If money is not an option for you, then I would recommend hiring a php coder from a website like RentaCoder.com or ScriptLance.com or eLance.com and get them to build a custom solution for you, this way you will make your new business directory stand out from all the other cookie cutter directories that are online these days using an off the shelf PHP directory script.

Don't get me wrong there is nothing wrong with these types of scripts, and we use one our self for our own Link Directory, but we have gone a step further and have had a custom template created for our directory which has turned out to be a very good investment.

The directory script we use and recommend if you are on a very limited starting budget is PhpLinkDirectory.com.

Step Five:

Now we come to the final step and which is promoting your new business directory, this can be done with or without spending money.

I will list five free options and five paid options below you can start to help get the word out about your directory.

Free Options:

- 1: Join online forums and discussion groups related to your new business directory and make a post inviting business owners to list their website/business in your directory for free or at a discounted rate.
- 2: This one is related to 1: make sure you add a Sig line linking to your directory in all the posts you make in the forums you have joined.
- 3: Submit your business directory to other free link directories online, just do a search in Google for the key word Link Directory.
- 4: Link to your business directory from your other websites that you already own or run this way the search engines will find your directory and index it.
- 5: Send out and email to friends or customers and ask them to link back to your business directory and in exchange link back to their website from your directory if it is relevant.

Paid Options:

- 1: Start a Google Adwords campaign to instantly start driving traffic to your business directory, but be careful because if you do not know what you are doing with Adwords you could end up spending a lot of money without any results.
- 2: Buy some paid links from other websites or directories that are similar to your own business directory.
- 3: Submit your business directory to the Yahoo directory at a cost of \$299 per year. Being listed in the yahoo directory will make your directory more creditable in the eyes of the search engines and your visitors.
- 4: Buy some advertising in offline news papers if your directory targets businesses in your local area.
- 5: Buy banner ads on other websites that relate to your business directory and try and to negotiate for a 6-12 month period because your can greatly reduce you're over all banner advertising costs.

About the Author

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