



How Can You Compete With the Online Competition

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When starting an online business, you will have to size up your competition. This is going to give you an edge in competing effectively in Internet marketing. Knowing your competitors, what they are doing and how many there are is only one aspect of the research you'll need to do. The other is being familiar with the demand for your product or service. To stand out from other web-based sellers or providers, you want to gain the knowledge of the quality of competition your site will face, as well as how many customers want what you have.

Researching the competition websites

It's very simple to go online to find out everything you want to know about your competitors. Take any major search engine and type in one keyword that relates to your business. You'll see a number of websites appear and you can check out a number of them. See what they are doing as far as website promotion and search engine marketing. Do they have quality copy on the site? How do they advertise? What sort of design do they use? How do they implement SEO? All these things can give you ideas of what you can or even what you shouldn't do.

How Many Competitors are You Going to Find?

Check out the number of competitors you will have on the Web. You will be able to see, once you've searched a keyword, how many pages come up as a result. Not all the pages showing will be ones that are actual competition. If you want to show more accurate results, take a keyword phrase and put it within quotation marks when typing it into the search engine. An example would be this: Say you are starting a business selling copywriting services in California. Your keyword phrase could be 'California copywriting services'. When typing this into Google search, you find an unbelievable amount of 97,900 pages come up. However, put quotations around these same words and you get only 3 results. Reduces the competition, doesn't it? This amount of difference isn't always the case, but you will find that fewer pages come up when using quotes.

Get Great Tips from those Paying Advertisers

Look to those who have the sponsored results in the search engines. Your competitors who are paying to advertise using pay-per-click marketing will usually appear at the top of the results list, sometimes in a little different format. If these types of listings show up, you can bet that they are making some sort of profit from selling their product or service. You should look into their sites, looking at what they are selling and how they are presenting it. Look into both these pay-per-click advertisers and the others listed below who show up in the natural rankings. You'll learn quite a lot.

As you go forward with your research, don't let the competition scare you. When there is quite a bit of competition, you can extrapolate from there that the demand exists for your niche. You just need to do a proper analysis and learn key tips from it. See what they are doing well and improve on it for your business. Perhaps they have an easily navigated site. Make note of this. See what they don't do well. Perhaps they have copy that looks unprofessional or is confusing. Avoid that aspect or take the hint, make it so it works and run with it. And remember, if there isn't much competition, this can indicate little demand. You might not make a profit with a business in this area.

Is There Really a Demand for Your Product or Service?

Besides finding out if there are a large amount of people selling in your field, there are other ways to work out the demand for your niche. To get you going, here are ways to work out whether your web-based business will get the hits you need and how to do good website promotion:

1. Go onto the online article directories. See if there are articles related to your business product or service. If many are out there, you can figure there is a high demand. Check out the links within the articles and analyze the websites of those marketing this way.
2. Join some online social networks and discussion groups that relate to your business. You can see from the conversations and comments what people are interested in and what they are talking about. You can see if there is some aspect of what you are doing now that you can revise in order to meet some need that isn't currently being met. Ask others for comments on your product ideas.

3. Look into books and magazines that are published about your business area. Publishing these costs money, so you know there must be a demand for the item. Look at the advertisements in the back of the magazines. If there are many ads for that product/service, again, you know there must be a demand.

If you try to launch your web-based business when you aren't able to develop a unique Internet marketing strategy, the market is saturated or there isn't a demand for your product or service, you won't have success in your endeavors. However, if you can create a unique marketing angle, fill a need that isn't being filled currently and also know there's a demand for what you are selling, you can outdo the competition on every count. By researching your market, you will get the leading edge and become a real winner in your field.