

Get Your Customers *Buzzing* through Internet Marketing

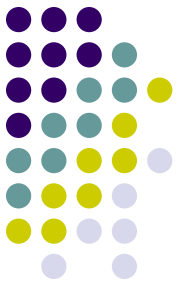
Massachusetts Small Business
Development Center Network
Southeast Regional Office





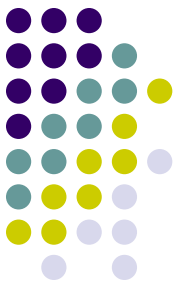
Agenda

- Introduction of Sponsors
 - Metro South Chamber of Commerce
 - New England Business Bulletin
 - MA Small Business Development Center Network Southeast Regional Office
- Internet Marketing and Communications
- Take Aways



Internet Marketing Basics

- Who needs a website?
- What can a website do?
- What makes a powerful website?
 - Usability
 - SEO: Search Engine Optimization
- Internet communications:
 - Email
 - Newsletters
 - Blogs



Briefly

Speaking

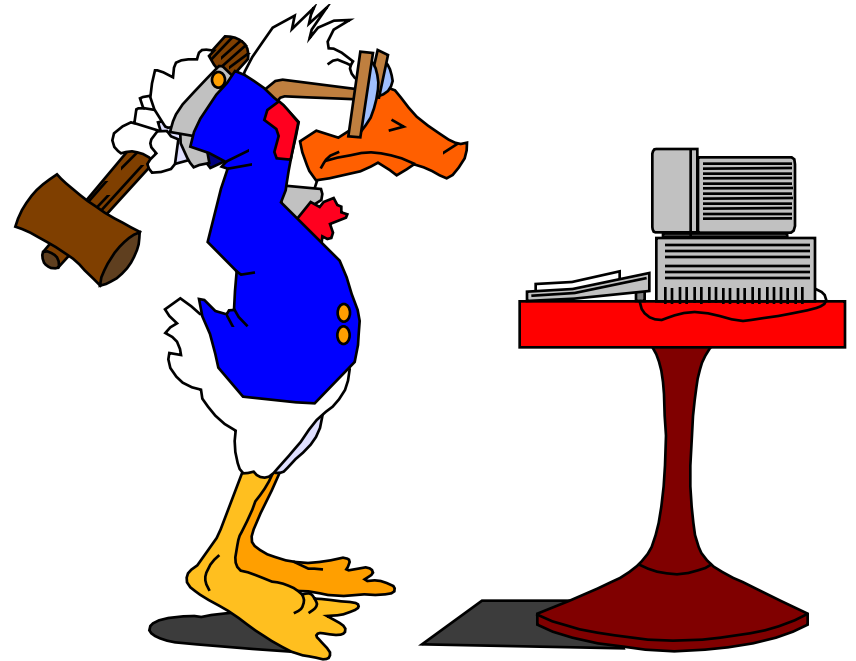
“I have been quoted saying that, in the future, all companies will be Internet companies. I still believe that. More than ever, really.”

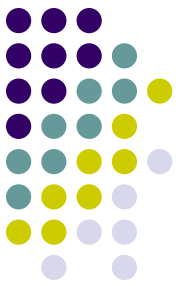
—Andrew Grove (b. 1936)
Co-founder, Intel Corporation

Who doesn't need a website?



- “A recent report estimates that the average person spends more time online than watching TV.”
- Yellow Pages

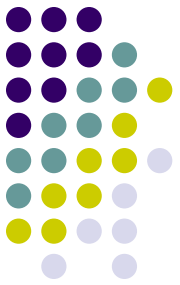




E-Commerce Capabilities

table 4.1 E-Commerce Capabilities

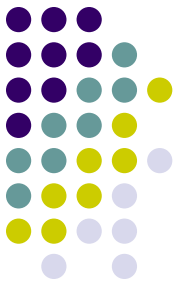
CAPABILITY	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Global reach	The ability to reach anyone connected to a PC anywhere in the world.	EBay—the online auction site—links buyers and sellers throughout the world.
Personalization	Creating products to meet customer specifications.	Lands' End offers online shoppers custom-made shirts, slacks, and jeans.
Interactive marketing	Buyer–seller communications through such channels as the Internet and interactive kiosks.	Best Buy stores have a "Computer Creation Station" that lets customers design and order custom-made personal computers.
Right-time marketing	The ability to provide a product at the exact time needed.	UPS customers can place service orders online and track shipments 24/7.
Integrated marketing	Coordination of all promotional activities to produce a unified, customer-focused promotional message.	Southwest Airlines use the slogans "A Symbol of Freedom" and "You're Now Free to Move around the Country" in both online and offline promotions.



What does a website do?

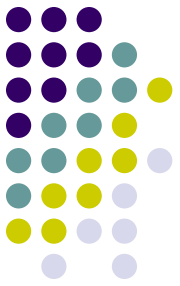
- Web has four main functions: e-business, entertainment, information, and communication.
- Communication is Web's most popular function.
- Firms use e-mail to communicate with customers, suppliers, and other partners.
- Online communities
- BUZZ! Word of mouth on steroids!

E-Marketing



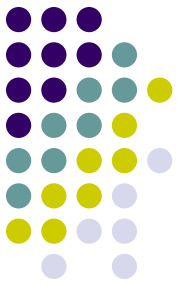
- Strategic process of creating, distributing, promoting, and pricing goods and services to a target market over the Internet or through digital tools.
- Firms that target customers by collecting and analyzing business information, conducting customer transactions, and maintaining online relationships with customers. E-tailing, virtual storefronts on Web sites.

What makes a powerful website?



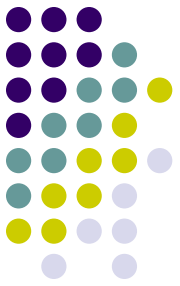
- Millions of Web sites offer users information, goods, services, and entertainment.
- But many of these sites are difficult to use, don't work properly, and ultimately don't attract or keep users.
- By following a usability engineering process, users' abilities to find information and satisfaction with Web sites improve significantly.

What is usability?

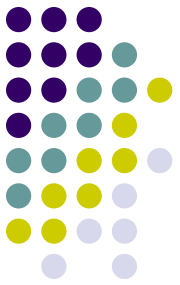


- Usability measures the quality of a user's experience.
- In general, usability refers to how well users can learn and use a product to achieve their goals and how satisfied they are with that process.
- Usability means that people who use the product can do so quickly and easily to accomplish their tasks.
- Usability may also consider such factors as cost-effectiveness and usefulness.

Simplicity is key!



- Your goal is to make your website or application as useful and *simple* as possible so that it performs measurably better.
- You will benefit from a modular work process that adds value not only in terms of classic user-friendly design, but also in terms of product development, customer relationships and marketing.

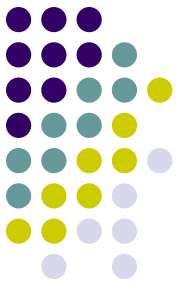


Basic Construction

- User friendly design
- Usability testing
- Expert evaluation
- Competitive analysis
- Visual design

Artist, Techie, Copywriter

Step-by-Step Usability Guide



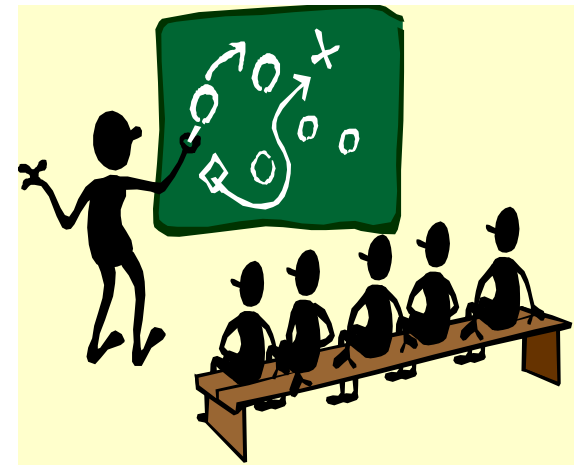
Plan, Analyze, Design, Test & Refine

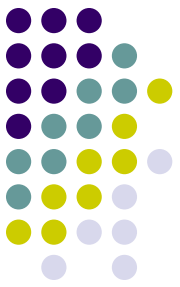
1. Think About the Process
2. Develop a Plan
3. Assemble a Project Team
4. **Learn About Your Users**
5. Conduct Task Analysis
6. Determine Site Requirements
7. Write for the Web
8. Conduct Usability Testing
9. Analyze Results

Simplicity!



- Usability is actually *simple*...
- DON'T MAKE ME THINK!

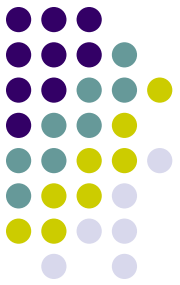




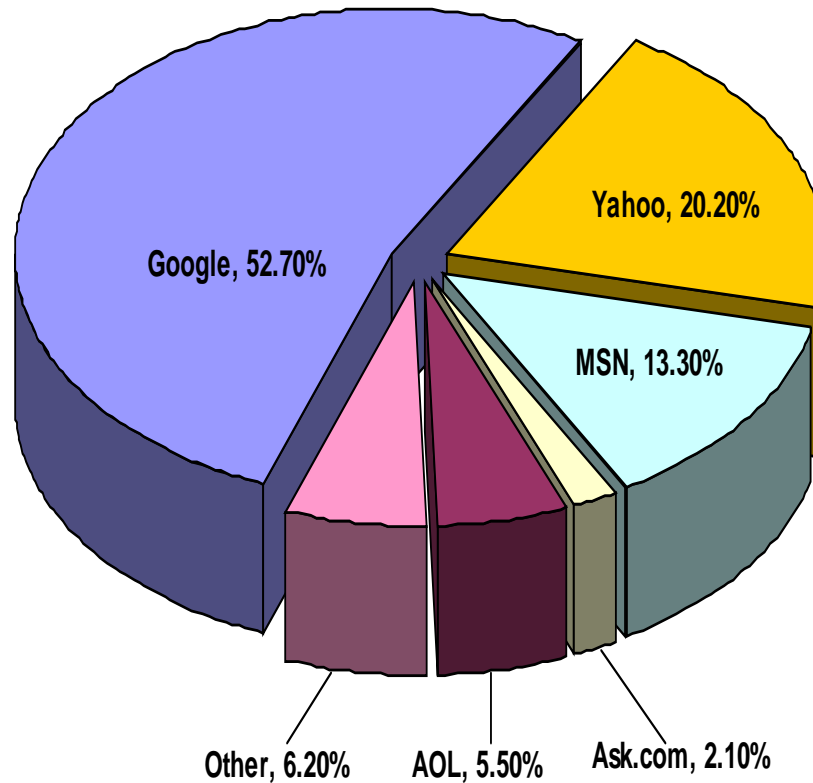
What is Search Engine Optimization?

The process of designing and updating a Web site such that it is likely to show up in organic listings for relevant user queries on popular search engines like Google®, Yahoo!® and MSN®.





Popularity of Search Engines

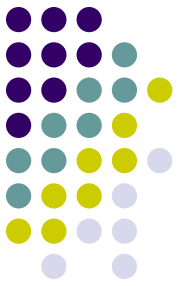


Source: Nielsen/NetRatings for MarketingSherpa



Six Steps To Optimize Your Site

1. Identify keywords
2. Optimize the Web site
3. Submit your site to the search engines
4. Build inbound links
5. Measure search engine results and site statistics
6. Maintain and update (Optimize) the site regularly



Spiders & Rankings

A spider is a computer program launched by search engines to read and organize the internet's content. Spiders "crawl" through the Web following links and indexing Web pages as they go. Also known as bots or crawlers.

Spiders "read" each page they find and put the content into their search engine's database so users can search.



Some Ranking Criteria

Relevant, Fresh, Unique Value

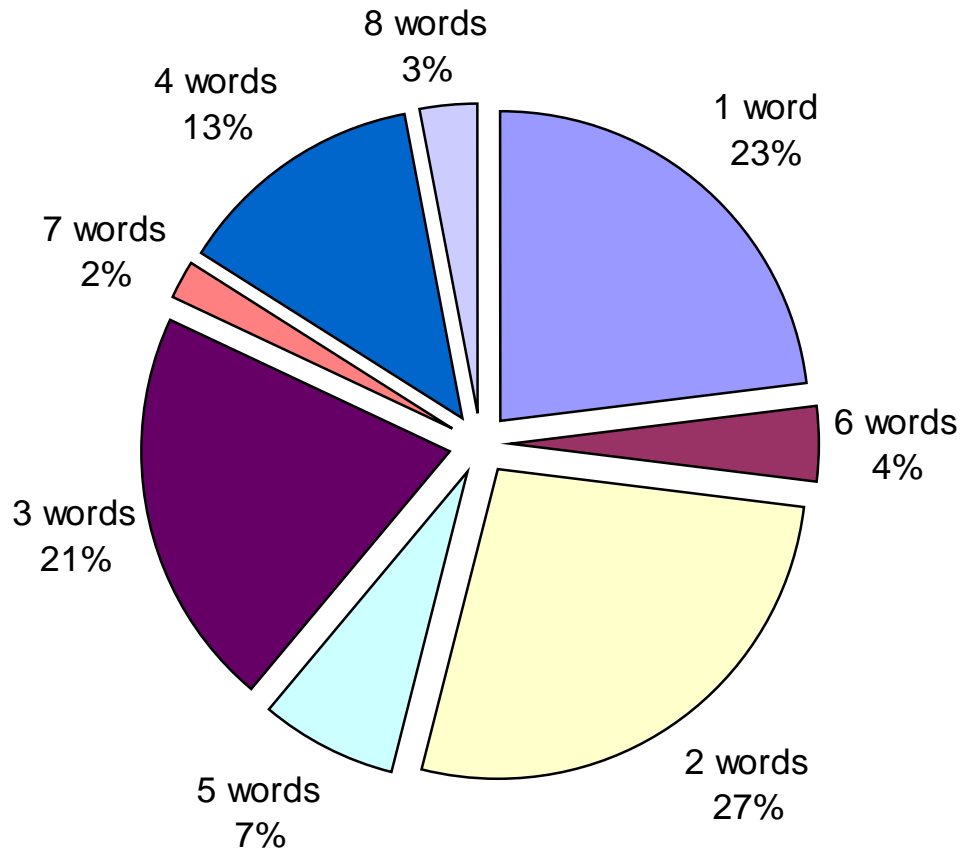
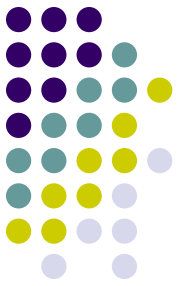
When identifying key words ...

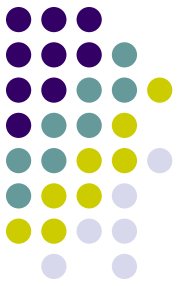


Consider:

- **Traffic** – How often do people search using the keyword?
- **Competition** – How many other sites appear with this keyword?
- **Relevancy** – Is this the keyword people will use when searching for this product or service?

Identify key words

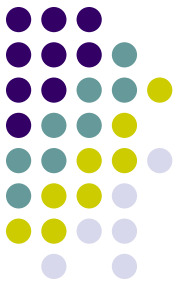




Maintain website

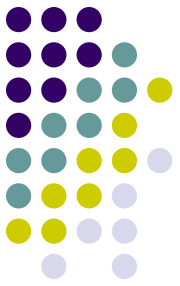
- Keep your Web site ***fresh*** and up to date:
 - Add new content when appropriate.
 - Monitor to ensure there are no broken links.
 - Newer content is often seen as more relevant!

Optimize



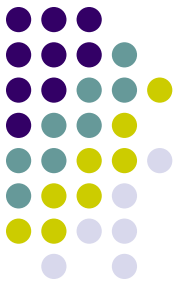
- Continue to optimize:
 - Add new keywords and new content frequently and based on what is hot at the time.
 - Build traffic through inbound links and online press releases.
 - Use reporting to gradually improve search engine results.
 - Keep current on evolving search engine algorithms.

Search Engine Optimization SEO



- Optimizing site for search engine rankings
- Page 1 (Rank 1-10) is the CONTEST
- Rankings are PER search phrase
- Only phrases used by prospects COUNT
- Rankings are COMPETITIVE vs. others
- Rankings CHANGE as competitors change sites
- Beware of short-burst “Black Hat” rankings

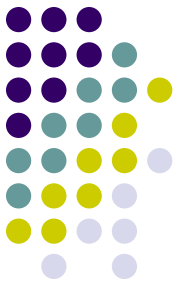
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Site Factors - Visible

- Domain name
- Page title
- “H1 / H2 / H3” – Header Text
- Page wording content
- Keyword density
- Text length
- Outgoing links – onsite & offsite

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Site Factors - Invisible

- Meta Tags
- Description
- Incoming links
- “Alt-Tags” – labeling of graphics
- Readability by SE “Spiders”
- Traffic – by “Naturals / Organic” searches
- Traffic from Pay Per Click (PPC)

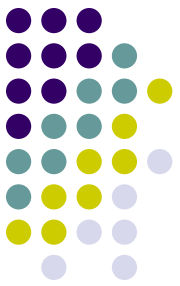
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Things to do

- Keep site fresh & changing
- Optimize for users
- Make EVERYTHING readable by SE spiders
- Keep tracking your SE rankings
- Monitor competition's rankings & websites
- Use tools to make your task efficient
- Don't try to become an SEO expert

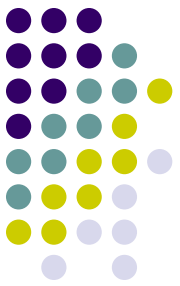
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Available tools to help

- Search engines
- Industry expert opinions
- Articles, blogs, newsletter, SEO websites
- Software packages
- Simple techniques
- www.SECompetitiveRanking.com for easy rankings

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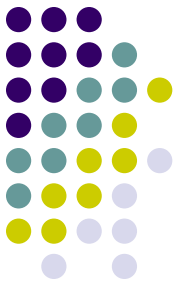


Briefly *Speaking*

“The new information technology, Internet and e-mail, have practically eliminated the physical costs of communications.”

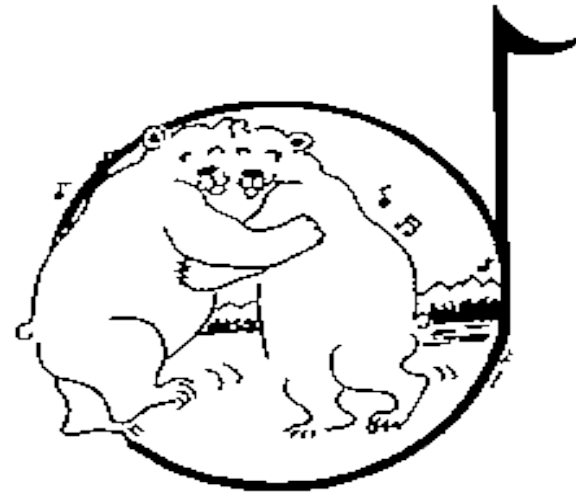
—Peter Drucker
(1909–2005)

Management author and
educator



Customer Relationship Management

- Why invest in building relationships?
- Technology has made it affordable for smaller businesses to communicate.

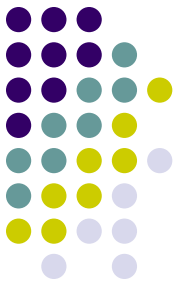




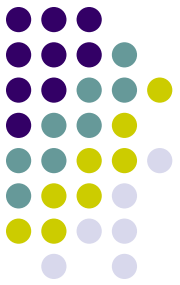
The value of a customer...

- **You've already paid for them.**
 - It's 6-7 times more expensive to gain a customer than to retain a customer.
- **They spend more.**
 - Repeat customers spend 67 percent more.
- **They are your referral engine.**
 - After 10 purchases, a customer has already referred up to 72 people.
- **BUZZ!**

Internet Communications Techniques



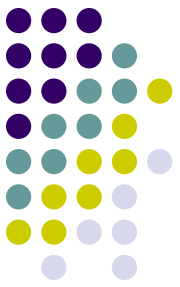
- E-mail
- Newsletters
- Blogs
- Social networks



Why does e-mail work?

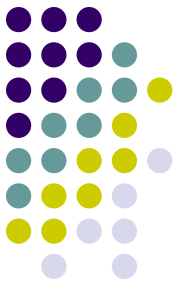
- Because people open e-mail from businesses they know and trust...
- Permission based gets through.
- They delete everything else.
- Permission marketing.





It's a 3 step process...

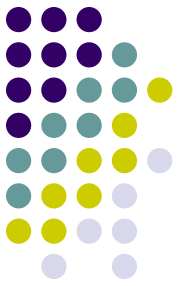
- Step 1: Building Your List
- Step 2: Convert Leads to Customers
 - It can take time...
 - On average, it takes 7 touches for a sale to occur.
 - Some buy right away.
 - Others research and try.
 - Some show interest but are not ready.
 - Make every contact count!
- Step 3: Keep customers coming back.



Build your e-mail list

- When you first start e-mail marketing, it's normal to have a smaller list.
- It takes a concerted effort to get in the habit of asking for e-mail addresses.
- There are people who have been e-mail marketing for years and still aren't taking advantage of all the opportunities they have to grow their list: a most precious asset.

Collecting contact information



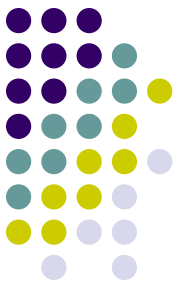
- **Collect email addresses and permission at every customer contact point:**
 - Website
 - Guest book
 - Order form
 - Customer support or inquiry calls
 - Tradeshows or events

Add a "Join My E-mail List" sign-up box on your website.



- Your website is usually the first place people look when they want information about your business.
- Don't miss the chance to start building a relationship with them when they visit your website.
- Constant Contact and other e-mail marketing service providers make it easy to do this.

Ask your customers for their e-mail addresses and permission.



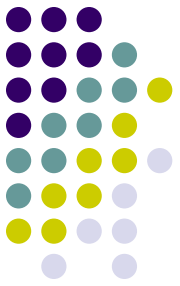
- Whether it's over the phone or in person, tell customers about your e-mail communications and ask if you can add them to your list.
- If you have a physical store, put out a sign-up book in a prominent place.
- If your business is internet-based and your only customer communication is through e-mail, send a follow-up e-mail after an order and ask if they want to join your list.
- If you have employees who interact with customers, train them to ask as well.

Include a "Join My E-mail List" link in all online content.



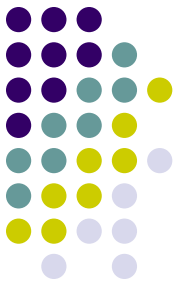
- Do you have articles on your website or on other websites?
- Do you have your own blog?
- This is another great opportunity to add people to your list. Include a link that takes readers to your sign-up page.
- Your copy could read, "Like this article? Get more like it in your inbox. Subscribe today for our monthly e-newsletter."

Include a "Join My E-mail List" link at the bottom of your e-mail signature.



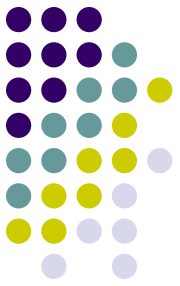
- This is great advertisement and it's free.
- Add one line that describes the benefits of your newsletter or e-mail promotions like, "Get our monthly newsletter with tips on how to grow your business" or "Receive weekly coupons for exclusive discounts."

Ask those you meet at networking events and at trade shows.



- When you meet people at networking events and trade shows, tell them about your free e-newsletter or your e-mail-only specials and ask if they would like to join your list.

Offer incentives for signing up



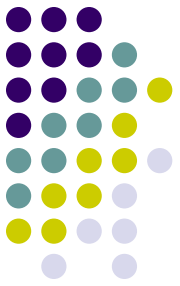
- It's amazing how a freebie or a chance to win a prize can be just what a person needs to "take the plunge" and sign up for your e-mail list.
- Your give away doesn't have to be costly; it can be as simple as sharing your expertise in the form of a free white paper or guide.
- Make it clear to those who sign up that they will be added to your list.

Run a "Forward to a Friend Contest."



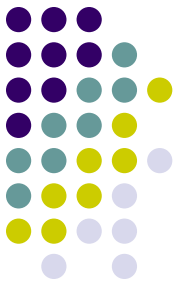
- In your e-mail newsletter, let your contacts know that if they use the "Forward to a Friend" link to send this month's newsletter to at least one new recipient, they'll be entered into a drawing for a prize.
- An e-mail marketing service provider lets you see which subscribers forwarded your e-mail to a friend.
- **BUZZ!**

Promote your e-mail communications in all printed materials (including your business cards).



- It's easy to forget about e-mail when doing a printed piece.
- Whether it's a brochure or a direct mail postcard, don't forget to add a line asking the receiver to sign up for your free newsletter.
- Business cards are a great place for a quick promo as well.

Writing an e-Newsletter



What are you afraid of?

- Fear of having nothing to say
- Fear of technology
- Fear of publishing regularly
- Fear of your writing ability
- Fear of spamming

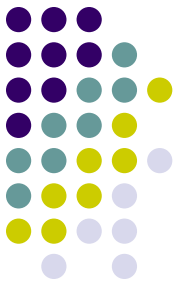


Frequency and delivery...

- **How often to send**
 - Create a master schedule.
 - Include frequency in online sign-up “Monthly Newsletter”.
 - Coordinate timing for maximum impact.
 - Newsletters (monthly / quarterly)
 - Announcements / event invitations (as needed)
- **When to send**
 - When is *your* audience most likely to read it?
 - Day of week (Tuesday & Wednesday)
 - Time of day (10am to 3pm)
- **Test, test, test**
- **Maximum impact with minimum intrusion**
- **Unsubscribe button at the bottom of every newsletter**



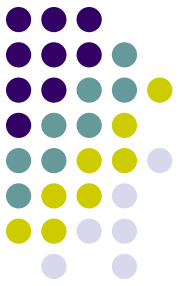
Getting your e-mail opened...



- **The “From” line**

- Use a name the recipient will recognize.
- Include your company name or brand.
- The clearer the better.
- The shorter the better.
- Be consistent.

Getting your e-mail opened...



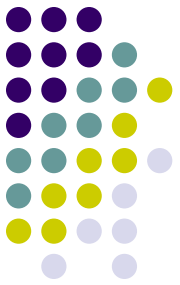
- **The “Subject” Line**

- Keep it short and simple.
- You have 3 seconds or less.
- 30-40 characters including spaces (5-8 words).
- Incorporate a specific benefit.
- Include your brand.
- Capitalize and punctuate carefully.



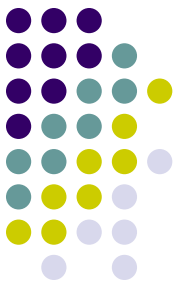
Getting your e-mail read...

- **The E-mail “Body”**
 - Provide relevant, valuable information.
 - Be clear and concise.
 - Use appropriate graphics.
 - Use white space effectively.
 - Include “Call to Action” links.
 - Create sense of urgency.
 - Capitalize and punctuate carefully.
 - Proofread.



Relevant and valuable information...

- **Focus on the content**
 - It's not about you.
 - It's about what you know.
- **Trade useful information for attention**
 - Will they talk about it when out with friends?
 - Will they look forward to your next communication?
- **Narrow your focus**
 - Be an expert.



What is a blog?

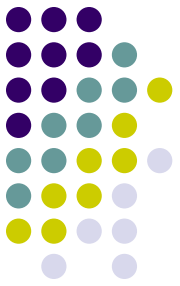
- A **blog (web log)** is a website where entries are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order.
- Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject;
 - Others function as more personal online diaries.
- A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic.
- The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.

Blogging



- Most blogs are primarily textual
 - Some focus on art (), photographs (photoblog), sketchblog, videos (vlog), music (MP3 blog), audio (podcasting) are part of a wider network of social media.
- Micro-blogging is another type of blogging which consists of blogs with very short posts.

A winning strategy includes...



- Setting objectives
- Collecting contact information
- Determining message format
- Creating a schedule
- Building professional communications
- Analyzing results
- **Continuously refining your strategy!**



Take Aways!

- It takes a techie, an artist, a copywriter and an SEO Optimizer.
- It's a lot of work, but worth it!
- It requires constant care and feeding.

Massachusetts Small Business Development Center Network Southeast Regional Office



- **Clifford Robbins, Ph.D., Senior Business Advisor**
 - Tricia White, Senior Business Advisor
 - Tammi Jacobsen, Client Service Coordinator
 - Melinda Ailes, Regional Director
- **Robert Baron, Ph.D. @ Copyright DotComERGO**

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