

Bazyn Communications Newsletter

Spring, 2006

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*“For positive inspiration, contact Bazyn Communications”
“True vision with insight”*

If you wish to be added to my email newsletter list, please sign up online at: www.bazyncommunications.com. If you wish to be deleted from my newsletter list, please sign up online as well.

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Letter from the editor

Dear readers,

After a nice spring rain I smell the fresh air and it reminds me that we need to brighten our outlook from time to time. One way to improve your outlook is to consult with someone else. It doesn't have to be a professional; even a friend can give you insight to a new opportunity or outreach. I've been adding new ways to assist others in their businesses and organizations. I've recently added a new forum to share information and inspiration: teleseminars. If you are interested in learning more about the offerings, contact me. I've included a good article about the importance of an accessible website as well as one on marketing strategies. Most will apply to any organization type.

Have fun reading this issue! As always, if you wish to contribute an article to a future newsletter, or make any suggestions, please send an email to abazyn@bazyncommunications.com.

Ardis Bazyn

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Updates

My third book, *BUILDING BLOCKS TO SUCCESS: Does the Image of Your Business Attract Customers and Motivate Employees?* is now available for purchase on my website: . You can receive a discount by ordering it on my publisher's website: www.xlibris.com. It is available on my website in print, audio cd-rom, audiocassette tape, and in BRF format for Braille displays and note takers (diskette).

To order discounted print copies, go to www.xlibris.com. Go to the author page and look for Ardis Bazyn or go to the book page and look for "Building Blocks to Success".

I now have two new coaching plans available if you indicate you read this newsletter. A three month plan is \$300 and a six month plan is \$500. Each includes one hour (sit-down preferable) and one 15 minute phone session each week following the original session. I can help you set realistic and reachable goals and/or teach you techniques to improve your business/organization.

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MARKETING STRATEGIES

BY: ARDIS BAZYN

What exactly is marketing? Are some specific marketing practices better than others? How can one business selling similar products and services attract more sales than another? Is it image or advertising that makes the difference?

Testimonials from impressed and satisfied customers demonstrate your capabilities vividly to other potential buyers. A website, newsletter, or brochure might contain testimonials. Referrals from pleased customers are extremely valuable.

If you have a restaurant, you may offer an email service to customers or nearby office personnel to keep them up-to-date on your specials of the day or week. Also, serving dishes, which are colorful and attractive, might lead to more purchases. Specials also encourage more ongoing business. If customers can anticipate a particular special each week, you may draw new customers that regulars have invited.

Creative displays of your products and services will entice customers to learn more about them. Merchandising is key in any venue where prospective customers can critique your wares. Visually appealing displays and racks are likely to generate curiosity.

If you don't have a store or place of business for customers to browse, displays at trade shows or conferences should be attractive. Arrange your products so they are easily seen and recognized. Also, print brochures and information should be easy to read. People want to see every exhibit and don't want to waste time clarifying exactly what you offer. Clutter may turn a prospective customer away.

Do you pay attention to the way other businesses advertise? Did you notice that most businesses invent advertising themes to portray throughout all the media they use? A catchy phrase that is identified with your business may be replayed in your prospective customer's mind. Who knows what may trigger a memory at a given moment? Do you ever find yourself singing along with an ad on TV or radio even hours after seeing or hearing a commercial?

Have you noticed how different telemarketers lure customers to buy? Haven't you been cited a prize you've won or may win if you call a particular number within so many days? I've been offered free installation of dish networks or digital TV. Free thirty-day trials of insurance or credit protection are common. Free vacations or cruises are offered over the phone to get you hooked to look at investment or vacation property.

What types of advertising literature do you receive as direct mail? I've been given free updates of software from several companies selling Internet services. Most have offered a number of free hours of service for trying out the product. Book clubs, travel clubs, and other long-term programs have suggested free prizes and discount coupons for trying the service or program for thirty days. Credit card companies often reward customers by offering free products for the cost of the shipping or free credit reporting services for thirty days.

Many businesses offer free merchandise when you make a substantial purchase. A free vacation or substantial rebate may be presented when you purchase a new car. Discounts for paying cash are also offered. Still others sell at a large discount for a limited time. Airlines will allow discounted rates for specified days. Many businesses especially restaurants also sell two for one meals to encourage volume sales.

You may increase your target market by teaming with another business with complementary services, resources, and expertise. Some companies, government agencies, and individuals want all-in-one packages which may decrease their cost for the services overall. Joint brochures or advertising campaigns with all the companies involved could be created throughout the different media. You must simply find the most strategic businesses for this purpose. If you sell printers and fax machines, you might try to work with a supply company, which carries paper, envelopes, ink, or other office supplies. I just purchased an all-in-one multifunction

machine and received a free cd-rom from AOL, which gave me up to two free months of service.

Affiliate programs are very popular today. If you put other company links on your website, you can generate a small fee for selling their product through your link. Also, adding other company links to your website may increase the amount of traffic on your site. You might offer other companies a small percentage of a sale from your site generated from their website.

Today, marketing companies are claiming relationship building is a new marketing technique that works better. However, it's not a new concept at all. Building relationships has always been the best way to build a business. Basically, it is getting the customer excited about your products and services by getting to know you. Actually, it is similar to telling friends about your products. You are making friends with those you contact on a regular basis. Once they trust you, they will buy your products and services.

Many standard sales pitches don't work as effectively today. Therefore, you must get to know prospective customers. Once they've found out from behind the scenes what and who you are, they should want to purchase your goods and services.

-- This is an excerpt from my third book: "BUILDING BLOCKS TO SUCCESS: Does the Image of Your Business Attract Customers or Motivate Employees?" Read ordering information elsewhere in this issue.

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Web Standards - Should my business site be compliant?

By Thomas Ashworth

"Web standards" is the new buzz phrase on the web. So, what are they?

Web standards are basically the use of correct web coding standards as laid out by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The web standards which are of most concern to modern business are XHTML and CSS coding practices. In the words of the W3C, "The XHTML family is the next step in the evolution of the Internet."

In order to achieve appealing presentation it used to be the case that various HTML hacks would have to be utilized by web designers to make a page look appealing. The most commonly know 'hack' (which is still in use today) is the use of tables to layout page structure. Thankfully these days are coming to an end, as web browsers have evolved and XHTML and CSS are now commonly supported standards. It is now possible to make sites which not only look great but are also constructed to the correct web standards.

This is all well and good, but should your business switch to a web standards based design? What are the business benefits of getting standards based re-designs?

One of the disadvantages of getting a web standards based design is that it can be difficult to find a designer who will make an attractive site that is also web standards compliant. A lot of very talented web designers do not create sites that are web standards compliant due to the time involved and the lack of appreciation received from the client for doing so.

The slow conversion to standards based designs is in part due to the ease in which a non-standards based site can be created. With the boom in 'what you see is what you get' (WYSIWYG) site creation tools like Dreamweaver, it is now relatively straightforward for talented graphic artists to create professional looking sites with little code knowledge. Although the sites look great, the construction can leave a lot to be desired. Poor page coding, although not always visually apparent, can result in your business losing money as well as make your site inaccessible to a large audience, difficult to navigate and difficult to maintain.

A quality web standards based web site separates the look of your web pages from the written content of your site. This addresses the negative points about a non-standards based site mentioned above. By separating style from content, standards based sites allow people using screen readers, mobiles,

PDA's and other web browsing methods to be able to navigate your site. These devices have trouble displaying table based layouts and big images so non-standards based sites are largely unusable. In the second generation of the web there is a wider range of platforms than ever before. Using web standards is the only way to ensure a high degree of uniformity across multiple platforms with your site. If your site isn't accessible then your message is restricted to certain customers, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that this isn't good in business.

A potential downside to a standards compliant website is some site add-ins such as certain bulletin boards, calendars and other dynamic content may not be written in a standards compliant manner. This becomes a problem when the add-in content is the only one that exactly fits your functional requirements. Sometimes in this scenario it may be necessary to forgo full standards compliance on pages where your non-standards compliant dynamic content is needed and migrate the page once the developers adopt standards.

A plus side of web-standards based sites is that maintenance is made easier, meaning your site can be more easily altered. As style

is handled by an external (CSS) Style Sheet it is possible to change a sites whole color scheme by changing a few key values. Also, as no styling information is in the HTML it is much tidier and greatly reduced in size making it easier to read and alter. Smaller file sizes mean that pages load quickly (providing a better experience for customers on slow connections), consume less bandwidth (reducing hosting costs to your business).

The final benefit of well constructed standards based websites is that as well as being accessible to your customers, often it will also be more accessible to search engines. Poorly structured, inaccessible websites can often mean that some of the relevance of your text is misinterpreted by search engines. This means you could be losing out in search engine listings. By having a cleanly structured web standards website you are helping to ensure that your site (and its keywords) are correctly represented in search engines and is considered more relevant than non-standards based sites in your industry.

The obvious conclusion to this article is that web standards bring real tangible benefits to business. Although finding a design company that will construct a standards compliant site is more difficult than just finding a web designer, the benefits speak for themselves. By moving to a standards based web site, businesses can ensure they have accessible sites which are maintainable and future proofed. Increased customer exposure and search engine prominence can all improve the level of business that comes to you via your website. Web standards are the future of the Internet and to ignore it could leave your business trailing behind the online competition.

Article kindly provided by Thomas Ashworth, a developer for NuBlue Web Solutions based in Lancashire, UK.
Email: info@nublu.co.uk
Source: www.bytestart.co.uk/content/promotion/7_9/web-standards.shtml

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Products and Services

Bazyn Communications continues to offer inspirational and motivational speaking, coaching, and writing. A free consultation by phone or in person is available upon request. My primary topic areas for speaking or coaching are: coping with challenges and change, developing/maintaining a positive attitude, image building for organizations or churches, setting reachable goals, and successful business strategies. I also give training and facilitation on team building, time management, and diversity training. I can adapt my presentations as necessary for the person or group with

which I'm working. For a list of the key points on most of these subjects, email me directly or check my website: www.bazyncommunications.com.

I also provide writing projects including: articles (with or without interviews and research), transcription of audio presentations (cassette tapes, cd-roms, and in person presentations), press releases, copy for websites or brochures, flyers, speeches, presentations, training modules (developed in consultation with the company or organization), and ghost-writing. If you would like to see a sample of my work, contact me. If you have questions, please ask.

If you wish to receive a text version of this newsletter or receive any past issues, please email me at: abazyn@bazyncommunications.com or call (818) 238-9321. If you would like to receive a copy of my brochure or one of my flyers on specific services, please contact me.

To order one of my books, check out my website or call. I take checks, money orders, and can accept Visa or MasterCard through Paypal.

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Contributions Accepted

If you would like to contribute an article for an upcoming newsletter, please send it to: abazyn@bazyncommunications.com. Any article of interest to readers, both individuals and organizations may be accepted for inclusion in an upcoming issue.

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Recommended Links

Check out the links of organizations in which I participate:
Xlibris Publishing: www.xlibris.com
Burbank Business Network International: www.bniburbank.com
Burbank Chamber of Commerce: www.burbankchamber.com
Burbank activities: www.burbank.com
American Council of the Blind: www.acb.org
California Council of the Blind: www.ccbnet.org
Randolph Sheppard Vendors of America: www.ntcbv.org
Independent Visually Impaired Enterprisers: www.acb.org/ivie
California Voter Empowerment Circle: www.CALVEC.org
(accumulated resources on voting issues)
National Alliance of Blind Students: www.blindstudents.org

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Favorite Quotes

“Recognition of the problem is 51 percent of the solution”

“No person will make a great business who wants to do it all himself, or get all the credit.” Andrew Carnegie

“Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing.” Abraham Lincoln

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." C.S. Lewis