



How To Generate More Website Traffic Without Working Harder

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Traffic. That tired old subject everyone takes for granted (while looking for the "secret" to generating a steady flow).

You can try this technique, that technique, the latest keyword research software. Or fad. But until you go back to the basics and tweak your understanding of traffic generation and make sure your core elements are in place, it probably won't work.

Traffic Quality

There's no point driving people to your website unless *your site is a place they'll be delighted to reach*. With something valuable waiting there at the end of the rainbow.

On the other side of the coin, even if you do tweak it to perfection, that won't count if no one ever finds your wonderful site.

That small paradox in uniting the perfect website with the perfect visitor is where most people fall down. Online entrepreneurs often seem to focus on one aspect more than the other, when the truth is that **website quality** and **quality traffic attraction** go hand in glove. They're a team!

And if you have a well-optimized, fascinating website that does attract a steadily-growing traffic flow, even that's no good at all... unless you **build your list**.

We're going to revisit the basics of quality traffic generation... starting at the most important principle.



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Step One: Build Your List -- This is a step people often put off for far too long. The best way to swim, however, is to step into the pool and get comfortable with it.

There are four elements to successful list building:

1. Having a great website that never lets visitors down
2. Having a product that attracts them to part with their contact information
3. Sustaining their interest by providing consistent contact
4. Having an Autoresponder account and sign up web form on your site!

Elements one and two are what people usually start with (and ultimately trip over). The reason? They spend months -- even years -- building the perfect website and/or product but allow paralysis to creep in when it comes to actually making "first contact".

But you can't make contact unless you have a website with at least one offering that will delight visitors...

Website Quality -- How do you make sure your site feels perfect to the right visitors?

You have to think of two things:

- **What do they expect** to find
- **What your site is actually saying** when it greets them at the front door

First impressions can make or break your chances of "hooking" your visitor into staying in the first place -- and then returning for that all-important second visit. Your visitors may never get to know you because they're horrified by the big fuzzy dice hanging up in your window. They expected understated elegance and you gave them a tacky neon diner. Or they were looking for bold and cheerful, and you gave them muted and repressed.

So it's not enough to make sure your site delivers good content: Visually, it's also important to connect emotionally and let them know you're able to deliver what they expect to find.

Take a moment to look at your site right now. Ask yourself the following questions:

- "Do my **site colors** help set the mood I want to set... or do they clash?"



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- "Are there any **unnecessary graphics** that might distract my visitor from my message?"
- "Are there any **graphics that unwittingly convey a different message** than the one I think I'm sending?"
- "**Does my front page really grab my visitor** with the message I want her to hear? Does it get to the point -- *her* point?"
- "Do I **sabotage myself** by displaying links, tabs or ads on my front page that takes her right off my site?"
- "**Is my content powerful?** Relevant? Current? Fresh? Recently updated?"
- "**Do I have an "About" page (with current photo)** that builds confidence?"

Try to put yourself in your visitor's shoes. What is she really going to find, when she arrives at your site?

A site that **delivers exactly what it promises** is the most basic core traffic success guarantee you can get.

Tweaking Your Site Without Working Harder -- Here's how you take care of the big "website tweak" problem (without spending the next six months endlessly re-designing or frozen in procrastination).

This will take about five minutes...



1. **Make a list** of every tweak you need to make. Yep, I said "a list". An actual list.
2. **Put a number beside every item on the list**, assigning it an order of priority. For example, if the most urgent thing that needs fixing is that pretty Forest Fairy Header (which doesn't go at all with your Business Building site), then scribble "#1" beside "Change Header".
3. **Rewrite your list** in the new "correct" order.
4. **Now cross off** everything that will (a) take more than 15 minutes, tops, to do (b) necessitate a learning curve on your



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part (i.e. you don't know how to do it!)

5. **Go tweak the stuff that's left.** It doesn't matter if you do these small tweaks all at once or schedule one fix per day. Just so long as you do them!
6. **Check them off as you complete them.**
7. **Once all items are crossed off or checked** go back to the ones that you know how to do but would take more than 15 minutes and prioritize those.
8. **Pick one a week to complete.**
9. **Check them off as you complete them.**
10. **Now all you need do is Outsource what's left and you've completely tweaked your website!** (You can start outsourcing immediately or whenever you are ready)

Most likely, your site is set up in WordPress. If this is the case, there are two elements it's vital to make sure you have in place:

- A well-written, professional quality theme from a legitimate designer
- An SEO plugin

Never simply Google "free WordPress themes" and download one without checking it out carefully first! **Only use a theme if it has been recommended by an authority source** such as Smashing Magazine or WordPress.org -- or is a commercially developed, paid theme. Free themes recommended by WordPress.org and Smashing Magazine have all been tested. Similarly, commercial developers know their success depends on producing well-optimized themes that are not only user-friendly, but whose code validates. (An "authority source" is **not** someone promoting a theme as an affiliate!)

WordPress traffic problems caused by using a free theme usually occur because of two reasons:

1. Themes can be inexpertly written by newer coders looking to make a name for themselves (or marketers paying bottom dollar for a "quickie" theme to throw at their subscribers). Bad coding alone can cause problems that bounce search bots out and stop them from indexing your site.
2. They contain malicious, hidden code directing your traffic to THEIR sites!



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Before you download any free WordPress theme, scroll to the bottom of their demo page and look for **links to the World Wide Web Consortium's HTML [validation checker](#) and CSS [validation checker](#)**:



If you click on those links, you'll be taken right to the [W3C validator](#) -- and you can be confident of seeing a result like this:

This document was successfully checked as XHTML 1.0 Transitional!	
Result:	Passed
Address :	<input type="text"/>
Encoding :	utf-8 <input type="text" value="(detect automatically)"/>
Doctype :	XHTML 1.0 Transitional <input type="text" value="(detect automatically)"/>
Root Element:	html
Root Namespace:	http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml

Update your theme regularly -- as well as your content. Even in WordPress, coding becomes outdated. Most reputable theme designers know this (especially ones demanding money for their themes) and update their themes as bugs are found or when WordPress is updated. It'll normally just take five minutes to upgrade your theme, so do this whenever your developer sends out an announcement of some new tweak.

But how do you know your theme is a well-optimized one? A big clue would be a message in the theme demo page description indicating that the designer pays attention to "clean" code -- like this one:



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Vermilion Christmas is a widget-ready theme designed for WordPress 2.6+.

With it's attractive Christmas design and SE-friendly structure, it's an excellent solution for bloggers and webmasters in need of a Christmas WordPress theme.



DOWNLOAD

Vermilion Christmas uses valid XHTML & CSS and has been tested in multiple browsers including Internet Explorer, Firefox and Opera.

Always **check theme source links at the bottom of the page**. Very often, you'll discover a free theme was provided by a dubious source such as adult or gambling sites -- you'll want to avoid those!

Use SEO Plugins -- This brings us to our second point: If WordPress is your content management system, it's vital to use SEO plugins. Doing so will automatically increase targeted traffic to your website and posts!

All in One SEO by Yoast -- The first essential plugin is Joost de Valk's (Yoast) All in One SEO plugin, which you can easily find from within your WordPress Plugins dashboard:

1. Log into your WordPress dashboard and select "Plugins" from the left-hand, vertical tab. Go up to the top left of your Plugins dashboard and click on "Add New" button:



2. It will open to a new spot. Type "All in One SEO by Yoast" in the search bar:
3. Select the "Search Plugins" button. When the results open, select "Install now":

That's all there is to the installation -- but note that you will have to configure it before your first use!



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TIP: To find out if a new plugin needs to be configured, go to your "Settings" tab in your WordPress dashboard's left vertical menu, and view the drop-down. If a plugin needs configuring the first time you install it, you'll see it listed there, under the "Settings" tab: You can just click on it and follow the instructions.

How to Use All In One SEO -- But installing it is only half the step. Now you have to use All in One SEO... every time you write a post.

It's not hard: When you've finished writing or copy-pasting your latest post into WordPress, scroll down that page to below the fold. At the very bottom, you'll find All In One SEO waiting to receive your optimized **post title**, **keywords** and **description**.

Enter them! (How fast is that? And it will increase your traffic significantly, if you've chosen strong keywords.)

2. Google XML Sitemaps -- A sitemap is essential for your WordPress blog or site. To install Google XML Sitemaps, simply repeat the process described above: First by finding the Google XML Sitemaps plugin via the "Add New" button in your Plugins dashboard; then installing and configuring it.

3. Google Analytics for WordPress -- A handy plugin for tracking your traffic results! Find and install as above.

These three plugins are absolute essentials for any WordPress site. They have been around so long they're virtually "evergreen" -- and are regularly updated.

Maintenance -- Another often-overlooked traffic generation essential: People spend so much energy setting up their blog or site, they think they're done -- and forget to maintain it.

A WordPress site is only effective if you regularly visit your dashboard and:

- 1. Delete the spam** your Akismet filter has caught
- 2. Check for new updates** (either to your WordPress version or your plugins)
- 3. Update** anything that needs updating!



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If something needs an update, you'll see a black circle with the number of items to update contained inside:



Checking your WordPress sites once a week is a good habit to get into -- and it takes only seconds to update necessary items, if you check "Update Automatically".



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Step Two: The Free Offering -- and Follow Up!

When you've got at least ten current posts on your site that your audience is likely to enjoy, that is the time to get them to part with contact information.

Plan your Sales Cycle -- your list of future offerings, starting with a "freebie" (your ethical bribe) -- and ending with high-end products or service packages.

You don't have to create all your products straight away, but simply getting your ideal target customer's contact information and then "forgetting" all about her, once she's downloaded your freebie, is not an option! (That's like having a wildly successful first date... but then never bothering to call your date again!) So have at least your freebie and one paid product ready (and another in the works). And **don't be afraid to create quick, paid-or-unpaid additional products** if you see a demand through feedback or suggestion.

If you don't have your own paid products in the works, plan on keeping yourself in their minds by **following up with your new subscriber after her download**. Offer a free email mini-course and finish that by suggesting products she might find valuable that are compatible with what you'll soon be offering. (At least, that way, you can pick up affiliate commissions on the product!)

Here are some strong ways to follow up:

1. **Thank you email** (this is a must!) Make sure it contains a way they can contact you, if they have further questions.
2. **Email mini course**
3. Email **sharing the latest, hottest information** on their favorite niche topic
4. **Timely tip about a great resource** you're sure they don't know (and you do)
5. Letting them know about **a great new product you're sure they'd love**
6. Letting them know about your new, paid product -- and offering them (as your valued subscriber) a **coupon or discount code**

Be creative. Mix-and-match strategies such as the six suggested above. But do build up to steps 5 and 6 -- rushing to hook your new subscriber into a sale straight away is like popping the question on your first date: You'll most likely get a "no" (and a hasty exit!)



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Having links within your freebie to your own paid product or someone else's is perfectly valid, however -- as long as those links lead to something optional that they can take or leave... Something **that will enhance what you're teaching them in your freebie report.**

And you don't have to offer a free report as your sign up incentive. Other strong freebie offers include:

- 1. Free professional-quality graphics** they can use
- 2. Free software or app** that will help them do a job (make sure it's well-designed!)
- 3. A really helpful "How To" video**
- 4. A free, time-limited coaching session** to give them a kick start (and a "taste" of your services)
- 5. An email mini-course**
- 6. A subscription to your valuable newsletter** -- but make sure the value is irresistible (and that you produce issues regularly!)
- 7. A free sample or taste** of your physical or digital product or service

Remember, you don't have to write or create everything yourself.

Outsourcing -- having specialists create content or products for you -- is a great strategy that saves time and adds value to your offerings.

And you can also buy PLR (private label rights) content such as follow up emails, and customize them yourself: Another great, time-saving strategy.



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Step Three: Engaging Your Audience

But make no mistake: The watchword for this new decade is "interactivity". People like to (a) do something or (b) get a result when they visit your site.

Quietly reading is no longer enough, for most visitors. Instant gratification is the order of the day, thanks to social networks like Facebook and Twitter (not to mention mobile phones).

Even if you have a static site, here's a "quick fix" you can do right now...

- 1. Add a "Share" badge** for your favorite social networks on every page of your website!
- 2. Embed a video, poll or quiz**
- 3. Create a Twitter widget** and embed it on your site sidebar
- 4. Put a Call to Action underneath your widget!**



Twitter walks you through this widget creation: All you do is copy-paste the code where you want it. And what people see, when they visit your site, is a hypnotic little "scrolling" display of your recent tweets. (Just make sure these are:

- Interesting
- Intriguing
- Lively and warm
- Relevant to your audience! (For example, you wouldn't Tweet as Pinky the Cat unless you're running a totally cat-oriented website and Pinky the Cat is your main "draw")

You will have (limited) options to customize the color or shape of your Twitter widget to match your site -- and you don't have to know how to code. Just follow the prompts.

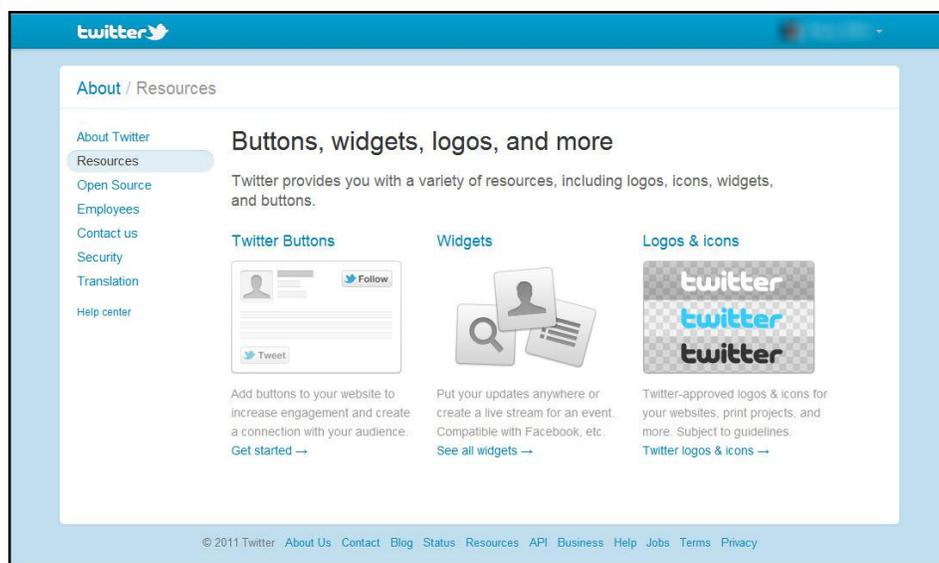


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To create a Twitter widget, log into Twitter and scroll to the bottom of your home page. Select the link "Resources":



This will bring you to a page where you can create not only widgets, but badges too...



Just click on the columns you want, and follow the wizard. That's all there is to it!

There are other elements to a strong WordPress site that help engage your audience -- installing a social bookmarking plugin such as Sociable and making sure your RSS feed is enabled. If all this is new to you, help yourself to a good, basic WordPress guide and take care of those issues right away.

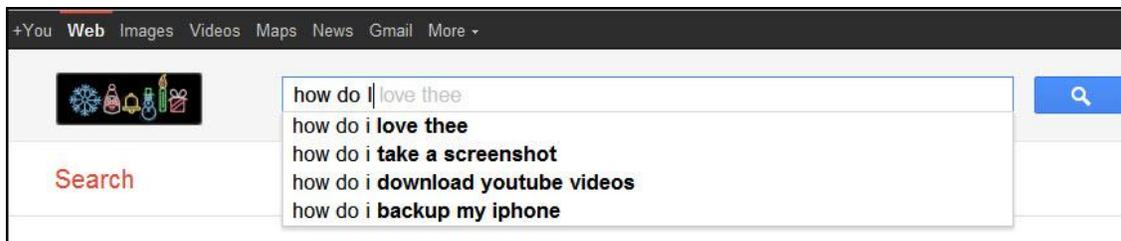
But most of all, you'll need strong, fresh content -- and that's when we finally get to basic keyword research. (You were wondering, weren't you?)

Nowadays, you don't have to spend over one hundred dollars on fancy keyword-generating systems. Simply keeping your ears open on social networks, noting complaints and "buzz" subjects on forums you belong to and letting your Google search box "suggest" keywords around articles you want to write will be more than ample to give a good idea of what your potential audience is interested in learning more about.



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For example, let's say you want to know what people want to learn about right now. A good way to start your search is by thinking like they do and asking: "How do I"... Immediately, you'll see **current top questions people are actually asking:**



The first drop-down suggestion ("How do I love thee") would be perfect if your audience consisted of (a) the dating crowd (b) poetry aficionados: In which case a fascinating little article telling your online dating scene target subscriber all about Elizabeth Barrett Browning might be just the sort of post to catch her fancy. (Barrett Browning was the first poet to engage in a "long distance relationship" that led to marriage with a man she hadn't met -- over a century before the internet was invented! And it was her poem, "How Do I Love Thee?" that reputedly hooked her husband-to-be.)

On the other hand, if your site supplies marketing strategy information to niche marketers, you would automatically discard the "How do I love thee" drop-down suggestion and focus instead on the final three suggested keywords as potential subjects for your latest post.

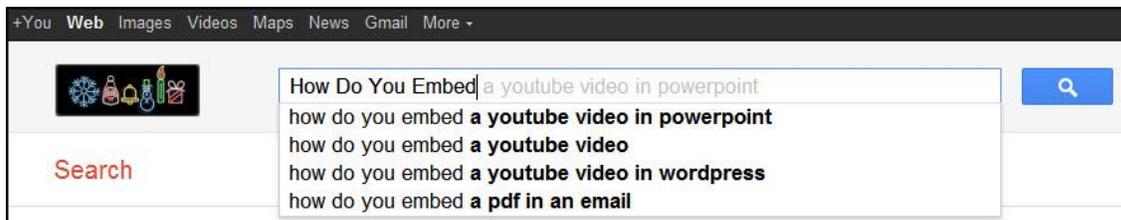
"*Take a Screenshot -- Spice Up Your Site*" might be your angle, since your audience most likely knows all about downloading YouTube videos. ("Take a screenshot" would be your "keyword phrase".)

If you're running a series on mobile marketing, however, "*How Do I Backup My iPhone?*" might be your perfect choice.

Or you might use none of these keywords -- but "download YouTube videos" may spark an idea for a better keyword phrase:



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You expected to find "How do you embed a YouTube video" -- but now Google's suggestions allow you to make it even more specific by giving you three other topics you might not have thought of.

You happily write a post telling your fascinated readers exactly how to embed a .PDF in an email... or in Power Point... or on their own WordPress blogs -- ***confident in the fact there's a demand for that topic.***

That's really all there is to providing what they want to learn more about!

Keyword Mechanics -- Do your best to **begin your article or post title** with the keyword phrase you've built your post around. (And it's still a valid strategy to add a couple more related keywords to your article body).

Here's what still seems to work best:

1. **Begin your post title with your keyword phrase** -- or make sure it includes it
2. **Include your keyword phrase in your first sentence** (or at least, in the first paragraph).
3. **End your post with your keyword phrase** repeated in the last paragraph
4. ***Do not keyword-stuff*** (i.e. lace your keyword phrase artificially through your article or post)
5. **Enter your keywords and a description** in your post's All in One SEO slug boxes

Your description should either (a) intrigue your reader into wanting to find out more (b) tell the reader clearly what she is going to find in your post.

And if you have to choose between beginning your post title with your keyword and your title feeling natural -- choose "natural", every time!



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Step Four: Covering All the Bases

It's not enough to have fascinating posts and products and also practice good website maintenance and SEO: You have to make the most of all chances to entice your prospective subscriber (and potential customer/client) to come down your "street". You could have the most fascinating "store" in the world -- but if no one knows you're there, your traffic will remain a trickle. The real secret lies in **covering all the bases** -- don't just use one traffic-generation strategy: Use as many as you can!

Here's a handy chart to help you make sure you've done everything you can to promote your site...

Article Marketing	Social Networking	Forum Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you <u>regularly</u> write short articles driving people to "more information" (a.k.a your freebie) on your site? - Do you consistently write <u>at least two articles a week</u> and submit them to relevant directories? - <u>Do you share</u> your articles via social networking, posts, guest posts, etc. - Do your articles <u>connect emotionally</u>? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have badges and "Like" or "Share" buttons on <u>all sites</u>? - <u>Are you consistent</u> in your social networking habits? Do you spend at least ten minutes a day checking you top three social networks? - <u>Do you acknowledge</u> people who respond to your posts or tweets? - Do your social posts <u>support your site image</u>? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you regularly "hang out" on <u>at least one specialty forum</u> engaging the paying, core group for your niche? - Do <u>you make timely, relevant comments</u> on posts that enhance the poster's status? - Do you give <u>tips, feedback, encouragement</u> and <u>share "insider" resources</u>?
YouTube	Guest Spots	Products or Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Have you considered making helpful "how to" videos</u>, demonstrating a "secret" your target audience is eager to learn or showing them how to use a product you've created or are promoting? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you actively contacted other niche peers and <u>offered to "guest"</u> on their blogs or online radio shows? - Have you arranged for your host <u>to include a link to your landing page or site</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have <u>a really powerful sign-up incentive</u> on your site? - Do you have <u>a regular, reassuring flow of your own and other related products lined up in your sales funnel</u>, so you can



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<p>- Have you <u>searched YouTube, the way you search Google</u>, to see what your niche is most interested in viewing?</p> <p>- <u>Have you promoted your video</u> via social networking, posting, press releases and guest posting?</p>	<p>(or promote your product)?</p> <p>- Have you sweetened the pot by <u>offering your host a reciprocating guest spot on your blog</u>, should they desire one?</p> <p>- <u>Have you been a great guest</u> who (a) delighted your host's audience (b) enhanced your host's status?</p>	<p>naturally progress people down it (to higher and higher ticket items)?</p> <p>- Have you ensured your products and freebies are <u>truly unique, valuable -- and needed?</u></p>
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Press Releases	Advertising	Email
<p>- Have you <u>incorporated press releases</u> into your marketing?</p> <p>- Do your press releases focus on <u>providing real "news"</u> on your niche topic for the directory or local newspaper readers?</p> <p>- Have you focused on <u>giving the editor material that will delight his audience?</u></p> <p>- Is your press release well formatted and written, providing information on <u>What, Where, When, Why, and Who?</u></p>	<p>- Have you considered boosting your status from unknown to visible through <u>social or CPM advertising?</u></p> <p>- Have you considered promoting your product through <u>social or PPC advertising?</u></p> <p>- Have you considered a <u>low-cost ad in a related eZine?</u></p> <p>- Have you considered using <u>social network ads?</u></p> <p>- Have you checked out offline advertising sources (e.g. local radio)?</p>	<p>- Do you <u>regularly send follow up and broadcast emails</u> to your subscribers?</p> <p>- Are these really <u>timely and relevant?</u></p> <p>- Do you <u>provide a good mix</u> of tips, resources, paid product offers, information, etc.?</p> <p>- Do you <u>provide a way to contact you</u> (that fits in with your lifestyle?)</p> <p>- <u>Are your emails "approachable"?</u> Do they make people feel they can trust you?</p>

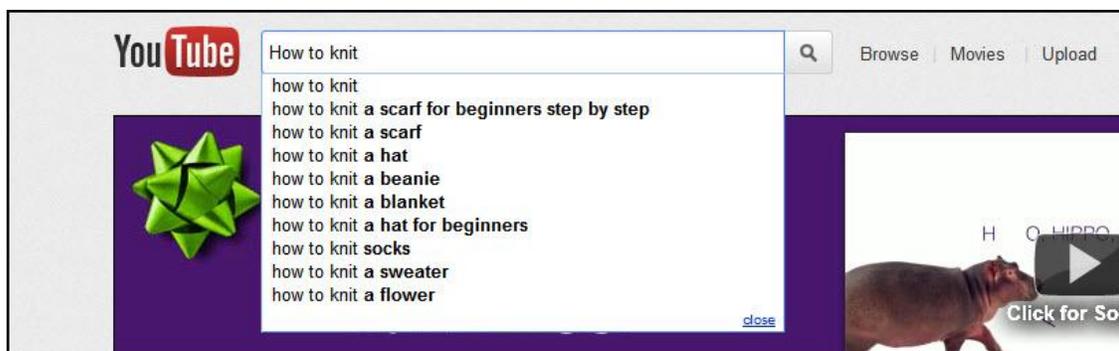


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So let's quickly recap all the ways to generate more traffic...

Ways to Increase Traffic (Painlessly)

1. Connect emotionally
2. Use social media badges and widgets in your sidebars (above the fold)
3. Engage with people -- talk to them on social media; provide them with answers they need
4. Acknowledge people. It's one thing to have them contact you: It's another when you take the time to acknowledge them (even if it's just a Facebook "like".)
5. Update your sites -- even with small, one-minute changes
6. Keep your plugins and WordPress version updated
7. Use the All in One SEO plugin every time you post
8. Be consistent! Don't flood your market with posts, emails and social networking for a day or two, and then disappear for weeks. Put in an appearance regularly. (It doesn't matter whether that's once a day, twice a week or once a week: Just make sure you do it at the same intervals weekly.)
9. Make sure you have sign up forms on all your sites -- ones that include or end with a call to action
10. Make sure you search YouTube for video topics, as well as on Google!





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- 11.** Make sure you have calls to action embedded in your videos (at the end) and in your YouTube video description
- 12.** Make sure you never, ever use any form of the words "making money" on YouTube!
- 13.** Consider advertising -- especially in non-conventional venues (i.e. social networking ads, ezine ads)
- 14.** Consider outsourcing! If writing content feels like the most nerve-wracking or dreary chore in the world, outsource it. If setting up your autoresponder is just too time consuming, outsource it.
- 15.** Make a marketing and traffic generation plan and (more or less) stick to it!
- 16.** Track your traffic -- even if it's through something as simple as your "Pretty Links" or your Google Analytics plugins.
- 17.** Consider using a well-recommended marketing consultant or social networking manager, if all this feels beyond your energy or time level
- 18.** Focus on what you can do -- not on what you can't

But there is one more step it's absolutely vital to take...



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Step Five: Let Others "Spread the Word"

Once you've got a freebie offering and at least one paid product set up and ready to go, **create an affiliate program**. Especially if you're unknown, you'll attract far more traffic (far more quickly) using this method than with any other!

Letting people who are already well-known drive their traffic to your product (and subscriber list) makes perfect sense. You can do this by making them **affiliates** or **JV (joint venture) partners**.

Neither of these strategies has to be scary or complex: If you haven't got the first clue about running an affiliate program, either put your paid product on a platform like ClickBank or JVZoo, which will automatically run your entire affiliate program for you, or hire an affiliate manager, if you have the budget. (All you have to do with ClickBank is:

- Have an awesome sales page
- Provide your affiliates with basic resources to help them promote you (and you don't even have to do that, if it seems too hard. It's just better if you can.)

Resources should include:

- A FAQ page for affiliates
- Graphics (ads, buttons, banners, badges, coupon graphics)
- Photos
- Your contact information (with an offer to "guest" on their blogs or talk radio shows)

But it doesn't matter whether you're looking to attract affiliates or JV partners -- you have to give them **an irresistible incentive!**

With JV partners, it's important to write a personal letter showing simply and clearly why your product will benefit their subscribers (finishing off with your incentives to them to sign up as an affiliate, which is basically what you want them to do).

And, of course, this assumes you know who their (and your) target subscribers are! (You are checking major marketplaces such as Amazon.com and studying your competitors?)



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A JV partner can be someone who's a little ahead of you in your niche -- or a "super affiliate". (If your offer is timely and professional, you do stand a good chance of getting a "yes".)

It's also important to recognize that the main advantage a more experienced, well-known JV partner will bring you is not sales cash, but subscribers. So offer them a huge incentive -- 75-100%.

Be sure to offer your affiliates perks such as:

- Discounts or "special" advance offers (time-limited) exclusively for their subscribers
- Lifetime cookies
- Bonuses (preferably cash) for above-average sales on paid products

Having others promote your website and products is by far the easiest way to generate traffic you could ever invest in!

Summing It All Up

The real key? Don't get bogged down into any one traffic-generation avenue. Instead, help yourself to a good, generous pinch of all or most of them. Make your mix **balanced** and **consistent**. Pick and choose what you can do quickly -- and **discard or outsource** what you know will "trip you up" or cause you to procrastinate.

If you are new to marketing, subscribe to a reliable, paid Autoresponder such as [Aweber](#) (the cost is minimal, starting at \$20 per month)... And get that first freebie and your modest batch of 5-7 follow up emails uploaded straight away!

Pay attention to and take action on even a smattering of these common-sense traffic generation suggestions -- and you'll have a thriving list of subscribers (and a growing stream of targeted traffic) before you know it!