



Information Technology, The Internet and Communications Support for the Hospitality Industry, SMEs and E-Commerce
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5 Free Ways to Promote Your Web Site on the Internet

1. Google Maps – Local Business Listing

This is probably the most important thing you can do to promote your business online. It is essentially a business directory listing but it is that effective it must be treated on its own merits. Sign your business up to this free resource and you will get noticed, you may need to employ some keywords to push your business to a higher listing but it's worth it. [Download a free guide.](#)

2. Blogs

A blog is a catalogue of articles on the web that can be on any subject, known as a web log or to contract it further – a blog. By writing articles on your business subject in an informative way (not a marketing way) you can increase traffic to your site and generate interest in the areas that you highlight on your blog.

There are many web sites that offer a free blogging service but it is far more effective to host your own blog within your own web site. The best method of doing this is to download a free Word Press blog from [http://wordpress.org/](http://wordpress.org) and install it according to the instructions. This software is free of charge and there are no hidden surprises, it is an excellent product.

3. Social Networking

The most well known of this type of web site is probably facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>) but there are many others, some of the more well known are twitter (<http://twitter.com>), my space (<http://www.myspace.com>), Digg (<http://digg.com>) and Stumble Upon (<http://www.stumbleupon.com>). Social Networking web sites can operate in different ways but basically they work by allowing you to interact with clients and potential clients. This type of networking has proven to be very effective.

4. Internet Directories

Internet Directories allow you to create what's known as 'backlinks' to your web site. If you can get a well known and reputable web site to create a link back to your own web site it boosts your credibility with search engines. Government web sites, the BBC and other reputable sources are very good for building that credibility.

A word of warning here, do not buy 'backlinks' from any company that says it can provide you with them, these types of links invariably breach the search engines own code of ethics and could cause trouble for your web site. Take time to build solid and credible links back to your web site.



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Directories are a good way of beginning and maintaining the process of building credible links. There may be specialist directories for certain types of business but some of the best general ones are as follows;

<http://www.yell.com>

<http://www.btexchanges.com>

<http://www.dmoz.org/>

<http://www.bttradespace.com/>

<http://www.thomsonlocal.com/>

<http://www.linkedin.com>

<http://www.ecademy.com/>

<http://www.touchlocal.com/>

Register your web site with these directories free listing offers. Some of them offer the option of paid advertising and some of them also offer a Social networking element.

5. Review Web Sites

Search Engines like to find web sites that are helpful, informative and authoritative and web sites that allow a certain amount of interactivity between the web site and the client. A positive interactive web site is seen as an indication of credibility and trust. Another way of building that credibility and trust is to invite your customers to review your services.

Google Maps allows clients to review the service of businesses in the directory listing section. Some of the directories mentioned above offer the same facility. Feefo (<http://www.feefo.com>) offers your business the opportunity to allow your clients to review your services and also gives an analytical breakdown of the responses.

This helps new clients to view your performance ratings with your existing clients. Invite your best clients to review you on any of these review sites, or even on the review sites that may be specific to your business.

All of the five methods of promoting your website mentioned above will build credibility, give you a presence elsewhere on the Internet and will help drive traffic to your web site. It can be time consuming but it's all free and you need to decide what and how much of it you do. All of these services can be provided and be enhanced by hiring professionals to do the job for you.