BLOGS, BANNERS & FORUMS

> *"Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning."*
>
> *— Bill Gates, Founder of Microsoft Inc*

Blogs, banners, and forums are yet influencing domains of online marketing. They can make your business stand out from the crowd. They are capable of building a good impression among viewers.

Blogs

A blog for marketing your products and services can give your business an identity and a voice to gain visibility on the Internet. Blogs being interactive, the others can share their opinions on the blogs. By authoring a blog, your business can get an expert position in the industry. In today's world on online marketing, blogs contribute a huge share.

Each time you write a blog post, one indexed page is created on your website. It intimates Google and other search engines that your website is active. This intimation makes the search engines check your website frequently to see the new content you published that they should surface.

Thus, every blog post is an opportunity for your business to be prominently visible to the search engines and increase the website traffic.

Do'S and Don'ts of Blogs

- Use simple language. Write clearly.

- Use relevant images.

- If you use quotes or extracts written by someone, give them due credit.

- Do not use bad language.

- Do not write to hurt people belonging to any ethnicity, race, color, gender, etc.

- Do not use copyrighted content.

- Do not plagiarize content.

- Do not hesitate to open your blog to access others' comments on your blog.

Banners

Online banners are nothing but small stripes of graphics containing links which take the visitor to explore information about offers, product releases, etc.

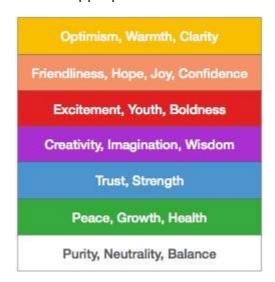Banners can appear on website, mobile Apps, blogs, or forums. You can use the following banners

to attract and retain user's attention to your website −

- **Static** − They display still text/images that are hyperlinked to your website.

- **Animated** − They play GIFs or Flash files.

- **Interactive** − They involve user interaction. For example, interactive map.

- **Expanding** − They expand in in terms of display size and information when users hover the mouse pointer on them.

Do's and Don'ts of Banners

- Decide the goal and target audience before creating banner Ad.
- Keep the banners attractive and catchy.
- Keep them informative to raise viewers' interest.
- Use relevant images in them. Use appropriate colors to evoke viewers' emotions.

- Select appropriate banner size according to screen size.
- Optimize the banners for fast loading.

Research shows that viewers engage with banner Ads more than TV Ads or outdoor Ads. The banner Ads are capable of targeting by gender, age, lifestyle, and geography better than most other media. They allow to reach huge number of consumers at low cost.

Internet Forums

They are the message boards where people can put their viewpoints, opinions, ideas, etc. Like-minded people can form communities to improve their online presence, and share their knowledge, experiences, tips, and tricks. Similarly, people can discuss and recommend products on forums. For example, the Internet marketing forum named Webmaster Sun, affiliate marketing forum Wicked Fire, etc.

When people discuss a single topic, it is called as a thread. Forums provide a vast platform for online marketing. They help find new customers.

Do's and Don'ts of Internet Forums

- Contact the Admin. Post private messages explaining your products/services and ask about paid sponsorship. Ask how advertising works on that forum.

- Register yourself for advertising your products/services.

- Contribute on forum. Ask questions, answer others' questions, and overall, be a valued contributor.

- Take the criticism positively, do not ignore it either.

- Do not post messages with sole commercial interest.

- Do not post marketing messages without getting to know about forum's policies.

- Avoid forums engaged by direct competitors.

- Do not be offensive. Do not feel offended either when other members write against your products or policies.

- Look for forums with at least 1000 users and at least 5000 posts.