

THE SCREW WORK ACADEMY

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1. Make sure you have something worth people's attention

It's remarkable how many people early on ask me how they can get some traffic to their website urgently and when I look at their site it's half-finished, with nothing significant to read, no email list and nothing for sale. And my honest reaction is, "You don't want anyone to see your site right now!"

So... make sure your site looks presentable. That can be as simple as a nice (free) theme, with a simple home page (or the blog as the home page). Make sure there aren't any pages that say "Write something here" or are otherwise unfinished – switch them off altogether if necessary. Remember: do less but do it well.

Then make something worth coming to your site for. If it's a blog, make sure you have a handful of interesting and useful articles on there. If you're promoting your services make a page selling yourself with a clear call to action of what they should do next (call you, email you, buy a session). If you want to sell products (whether digital or physical) make a clear offer on an attractive product on the front page.

And finally you should have an email signup box for aweber or similar (signup at <http://introduction.aweber.com>) and a reason for them to sign up such as a useful free download. (If you're a Platinum member we covered each of these things over the last 6 months. If you're a Momentum member, you've just got time to upgrade and join us on the next Platinum Academy where I will teach you all of this step by step!)

BOOTSTRAPPING 15 WAYS TO GET TRAFFIC AND EMAIL SIGNUPS WHEN YOU'RE STARTING AT ZERO

We live in a wonderful era where anyone can get their message out to the whole world. You don't need to wait to be chosen by a publisher, newspaper, radio station or TV programme. You can build your website, blog or shop-front for next to nothing in one afternoon. However putting your site up alone will not automatically bring people flocking to your site to read your ideas or buy your products.

So how do you get people to come to your site or blog right at the beginning – when you have zero traffic, zero email list and zero sales? Here are 15 ways to make it happen (starting with the most important and easiest to implement strategies first).

2. Write for other blogs, sites or newsletters

Write a really interesting or useful article for someone else's website, blog or email newsletter – choose one that already has a good number of readers who you think would be interested in your stuff. Then at the end of the article say, "To download my free guide to [something related to what you've just written about] go to www.mywebsite.com/download". Make sure it's a clickable link.

On your site, ensure people have to sign up to your email list to get the download.

I got the first 2000 people on my email list by doing exactly this (with some of the next strategy – giving talks).

TURN OVER FOR STEPS 3-15



3. Give talks and collect email addresses at the end

Give talks at events where other people are getting good numbers (at least a few dozen people) and at the end pass round a clipboard with a signup sheet that asks for their name and email address. Explain that you will send them something useful like your talk slides or a free guide or audio recording or worksheet and that you will also send them other occasional updates (ie you'll put them on your email list).

Important: you will get many many more signups if you create the form and hand it round on a clipboard. Don't just ask people to go to your site. For Platinum members there is an email signup sheet template you can edit and print on Academy Central.

Once you've got the sheets filled in, import them into aweber when you get home and send them what you promised.

4. Be interviewed

If you can get interviewed (for any reason at all) on a popular blog, podcast, webinar or internet radio show (or even broadcast radio or TV show), then you can do the same thing and encourage people to signup on your site for a free download.

Start thinking of reasons people could interview you! That might not just be directly because of what your business offers. I had a client making natural skin creams who got a lot of exposure just because she started her own business after the age of 50 and magazines were interested in the story of taking a new direction later in life.

5. Create Linkbait content

Put the time and effort in to create a killer article that goes in depth into a topic and gives really useful advice. Or even better, a whole series of articles. This is called linkbait because it's irresistible for people to link to it. Step by step guides or lists are effective for this. This article for instance would make good linkbait if it was on my website!

6. Use other people's viral content

If you see something really funny or interesting or shocking, include it in a blog post and write something about it. For instance I have twice embedded a really interesting or funny video into a blog post and found the post going viral simply because the embedded content is so good. (In one case my traffic hit 4000 visitors a day!) This is particularly powerful if you do it immediately on seeing a new meme – so before it has become old hat on facebook (about 24 hours these days!)

7. Video marketing

Do a series of videos on YouTube (which could be as simple as you talking to camera) using specific keywords for each that you think people will be searching for. Link from each video to your website. Platinum member Richard Jordan does this well for his gardening work.

YouTube can generate a lot of traffic if used right.

8. Pinterest

Pinterest can send a lot of traffic to your site. It's great for image-focussed businesses or ones where photos are useful – eg design, yoga/fitness instructors, styling, cooking, juicing. Pin images with associated text and ensure they link back to the relevant part of your site.

9. Contributing to groups, bulletin boards, chat rooms, forums?

Go into groups, bulletin boards, chat rooms, forums and Quora.com discussions and help people by answering their questions.

Infusionsoft expert David Holland does this a lot. It seems every time I google a question about Infusionsoft (my business automation system) I find a forum with David answering that exact question. I have since paid David for several days' consultancy. Although I found him through one of my mentors, I would certainly have noticed him by now if I hadn't.

10. Pay for traffic

You can get traffic using pay-per-click ads on google or facebook. Probably not for tech-phobic beginners – you'd need to either hire someone or develop the expertise yourself. Generally it is better to use paid traffic to promote paid products so that you're not losing money. This could be a small downloadable product as cheap as \$7 or \$10. Or it could be for a bigger product if you have one ready to sell. You could also use paid traffic if you're launching a book.

11. Affiliates

If you've created a really good free download you can ask people to directly promote it in their newsletters or blogs. If you have an affiliate system set up you can even pay them if people later pay for something of yours. Or you could sell a cheap downloadable product for \$7 or \$10 and give 100% commission to affiliates – that way they get something out of it and you get buyers who you can offer other things to.

12. LinkedIn

Build up your LinkedIn network then save your connections as a csv file and import it into your autoresponder. Then ask them to confirm they want to receive emails by clicking on a link to opt in (and promise them something useful like a white paper or free report in return). LinkedIn is well suited to consultants, contractors and freelancers.

13. Run a webinar

Run a webinar on an important topic in your niche and offer people to attend for free if they just sign up to your email list. Or run a regular (eg monthly) webinar where you interview a different interesting person in your field each time. I know someone who built an email list of many thousands with a regular webinar simply called "People you should meet".

14. Create an interactive app

I added a couple of thousand people to my email list by creating a quiz for scanners that after completion requires a signup to my email list to get a report explaining how to interpret your results.

I hired a developer to create it for me. I then asked for the link to the quiz to be included at the end of an article I was interviewed for in Psychologies magazine.

You could do the same thing by making an interactive quiz or diagnostic tool. When done right, they can spread virally. I still get signups via the quiz every week even though the article was published two years ago.

15. Offer free 15 minute consults

Offer people free 15 minute phone consults to your best prospects when they sign up to your list. Use TimeTrade to let people book themselves into a free slot in your diary. Use some of the 15 minute session to explain the paid options of continuing to work with you. This is a great way to start to convert traffic and people on your email list into prospects who might buy a product or service from you.

Finally...

It's important to realize that just because you build it doesn't mean they'll come (sorry Kevin Costner). You need to put time and effort in – firstly to create something good and then to get people to come and see it. The good news is that it gets easier over time because your email list tends to have a compound effect. Adding 500 people to an email list of 5,000 is far easier than getting your first 500.

Start now, have fun with it, and you will get there.