

Social Networking for MLM

***Use Social Media Networks to Solve the Two
Biggest Problems Multi-Level Marketers Face in
Reaching and Educating Their Downline***

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The Two-Fold Problem of MLM

Nothing throws water on a new multi-level marketer's enthusiasm than to have a prospect hang up the phone or scoff in their face when being approached with a business opportunity.

Since the lifeblood of your business depends on a strong, independent base of distributors for your downline, you're faced with the difficult task of reaching fresh prospects, which isn't an easy task.

Then to make matters worse, even if you *can* manage to recruit a new downline, you face the challenge of keeping them motivated and growing – not to mention *succeeding*. Assuming you've been in network marketing long, you may have already run into that wall of "How do I get and, more importantly, *keep* a downline that's active and growing?"

Problem #1 - How Do You Reach Serious Prospects?

When you're prospecting for new IBOs (independent business operators), you want to focus your reach toward those who are actively seeking a home-based business and not use the scattergun approach to hitting up everyone you know.

In the past, the only way prospects were contacted was through what was affectionately known as the contact list. Our hypothetical IBO, Jerry, was told to write down the names of anyone and everyone he could think of, including his great Aunt Sue and his family dentist – basically anyone who breathed.

Everyone in his sphere of influence was a prospect.

The problem was that not everyone on Jerry's list really wanted to be a prospect. Most weren't even remotely interested in selling what it was he was trying to share with them. Consequently, Multi Level Marketing opportunities have gotten a bad name simply because of this "everyone is a prospect" approach.

Who wants to be tricked into attending a business meeting, right?

There's a better way, thanks, in great part, to the advent of the World Wide Web and social media networks that expand your search to all four corners of the world, and not just your local geography.

But even if you succeed in bringing an ample supply of prospects to your downline, you might still be stalled by the second obstacle.

Problem #2 – Convenient Training and Encouragement for New Recruits

Once Jerry has a new member in his downline, how is he supposed to get them the training and encouragement they need? You can't rely on a prospect to hunt around the 'net digging up kernels of knowledge about how to succeed with MLM – because many either won't go searching or don't know how to find the information.

If you're new to MLM yourself, then you have no credibility to speak of, which makes it even harder to motivate your downline to succeed. While it's true that many MLM companies provide excellent training materials and kits for their IBOs, unless the new distributor has regular contact with an active upline support system, they often flounder and eventually “die,” meaning they abandon the opportunity and further spread the misinformation that MLM is just a scam.

What Jerry needs is a way to keep in touch with the new and growing members of his downline in a way that's convenient for both him and the recruits. While some training is best done one-on-one, most can be accomplished through websites accessed through the Internet.

Solution #1 - Perfect Prospect/Contact Solution

Through the marvelous means of the Internet and the many social media now available, network marketers have at their disposal the perfect medium of reaching prospects. Using it, you never have to be concerned about offending anyone by inviting them to a meeting where they ended up leaving in disgust.

Never again will you get “death threats” for approaching someone in the mall in an attempt to get them interested in your business (true story). No more avoidance from friends and family.

They don't even need to know you're building a business until it's well underway. By then, you have some credibility and they'll be more likely to want to hear about your business opportunity.

Through such social media as Squidoo lenses, Google Knols Hub Pages and other hot spots, you can present the business in the very places opportunity seekers are hanging out.

No more hard selling.

No more slammed doors.

No more jeers from scoffing friends – all because you aren't trying to *convince* a person that they need to get into your business. The people you are putting your opportunity in front of are actively seeking - and therefore are already a warm prospect.

All you have to do is win their trust by building a relationship through a series of articles and downloadable PDF files, which are designed specifically to lead your prospect to make the decision to join your business.

Actually, if done properly, your prospect will be practically banging down your door to get access to your business. Hard to believe? It happens every day using what's called Attraction Marketing.

You're going to build pages in social media sites that speak to whatever it is they're searching for. It might be "make money online," or "pay off my debt," or even "find a new job."

It could even be based on the product your MLM is built around. If it's travel, then you might hook someone who loves to travel, wants to buy your product, but wouldn't mind raking in a few dollars just for recommending something they already love to people they know.

These pages you build will reel the prospects in because they'll use keywords in the content, and when the prospect goes on Google or another search engine to find what they're looking for, Google will present your page to them as an option, which starts the ball rolling.

Yet once these people are in the loop, how do you help them grow in the business? Most people coming to you will only have that initial enthusiasm which caused them to sign up - but they don't have the faintest idea **how** to take the next step.

Solution #2 – Training Your Downline Is a Cinch Online

While it's true that you are part of someone else's downline and have access to their training materials, there is nothing keeping you from being your own group leader. As a matter of fact, that should be your goal.

It's what makes MLMers successful.

When you use the many tools available online to build your downline and train your IBOs and maintain communication, then you are maximizing your investment. Besides, you want your training materials to be better than what you were given, utilizing your own slant on the topic of marketing and product sales.

Your downline is your workforce – it's in both yours and their best interest to train them in the things they need to know in order to be successful. Motivation and education is the key to keeping your downline enthusiastic and vital.

He or she is already excited about the business opportunity. Now take advantage of that excitement and do what you need to do to provide the tools they need for success.

Training and education take time, and it's best to break it down into smaller bites. Some will learn more quickly than others - but they all need to learn two main things:

#1: The product line of your business, what you have and how it benefits the buyer.

#2: How to sell the business *opportunity* to their prospects and future customers.

That education should include regular contact either by autoresponder or blog. Squidoo lenses, Google Knols, Hub Pages and WetPaint wikis are ideal for creating training modules for your downline.

They're free and extremely easy for even non tech savvy individuals to set up and maintain. Then for those quick messages, you can use Twitter or even just email broadcasts on an autoresponder.

Use Social Media Networks to Attract Your Own Downline

Online, there are several very useful programs that allow you to set up an attractive site which is informative - and the best part is that they're free: Squidoo lenses, Google Knols, Hub Pages and WetPaint Wikis are the top most used sites which concern your MLM needs.

Squidoo lenses are basically a one-page site that has "plug and play" modules for the various types of content - including text modules for articles, a poll module to get quick input, easy Amazon links for books appropriate to the subject, an RSS blog feed module, and much more.

With each Squidoo lens you create, you can feature some aspect of your business – starting with raw recruiting of getting your prospect joining your downline to the on-going educational materials you'll want to provide to them.

With Squidoo's many content modules, you can feature educational articles, which lead your reader to understand the benefits of being in business for themselves. You can also include audio file sound bites, live opt in forms, and video on your lens, so it's a true multi media experience for your prospects and downline.

In your first lens, the one you present when someone wants to know how to make money online, for example let your reader know that there's a solution and that you'll lead them through the solution.

Now isn't the time for a hard-sell approach. You're warming them up, so play your personality up in the lens and make them feel comfortable that you aren't out to take advantage of them.

You'll build momentum with your sales pitch, starting with soft links for those who are anxious to get going, but linking to other lenses, Knols, or pages with more bait and information until your reader will be sold that they need a business like the one you offer and that you are the person they want leading them.

Those are the basics of what's called Attraction marketing. But before we get into some attraction marketing basics, we need to cover some basic search engine optimization tips to ensure your social media content gets found in the first place.

SEO 101 – Basics of Search Engine Optimization

Now, it would be nice if people could just type in “how to make money at home” and just show up at your lens or Knol about how to make money with MLMs, but that’s fantasy – there are just too many others vying for the same position.

That’s not to say that someday you won’t pull in a top 10 SERPs position for those keyword phrases, but in the meantime, you need to find other less competitive phrases to attract your prospects.

This is where some basic search engine optimization (SEO) comes in handy. Basically, you will take some general search terms like “make money from home” or “work at home” and type them into a keyword research tool, like the free Google Keyword external tool for a basic search.

When you do a search, it will come back with dozens of terms that contain your main term plus the synonyms in the list below the main one.

From your list of results, choose one and then write articles around that phrase. The idea is that you will write 3 to 4 short 250 word articles per lens or Knol that your reader digests from one to the next.

For example, for the phrase “work at home,” you would write an article with the title, “Best Work At Home Plans,” “How To Work At Home,” “Making Time For Work At Home Jobs,” and “Work At Home: 5 Steps to Success.”

Here’s the important part: The idea is to include the key words in the title *and* content. Some go so far as to include two keywords (Ex. Work At Home – 5 Things to Look For When Looking for Ways to Make Money Online”) in the titles.

In that title above, you have “work at home” and “make money online” in the title. But don’t just stop there. You need to include them in the introductory paragraph and at least in the closing paragraph of each article. This way the search engines can tell that the article is indeed about “work at home.”

You will do this for each keyword phrase. Write 3 - 4 short 250-word articles for each lens or Knol for each search term. And don’t forget to try to use

them in the URL that you create when you first register for a lens like this: Squidoo.com/work-at-home.

The same principle applies for Hub Pages and WetPaint if you choose to add them to your arsenal. Over time, that will amount to dozens, if not hundreds of lenses and Knols - but that's your goal – to get a small and growing empire in your niche which will eventually dominate your MLM niche subject matter.

You don't want to get hung up on the inclusion of keywords so much that the articles don't sound natural to a human reader - because after all, you are writing for *them* not just the search engines.

Google won't like it either.

But following the above layout, these basic tips will help your lenses hopefully they will show up on the first pages of the SERPs.

Finally, make sure you include anchor text links to your website where the product/opportunity is sold using those keyword phrases and create a lensroll that includes links to the next lenses in your pre-recruiting or MLM educational series so they know where to go next.

What to Feature on Your Lenses

Now that you know you need to write articles for lenses and other web 2.0 sites, just what do you need to cover and how do you organize it?

First of all, it might be helpful to know that statistics indicate that a person needs to be exposed to an idea 7 times before they will accept it. So, rather than writing an entire lens on "why you need my MLM," you'll need to start way back.

Break it down into smaller steps. While this education process could be all on one lens, it might be better if you utilize a different lens for each step through the pre-recruiting phase.

Start back with dream building. Devote a lens to the freedom achieved by being your own boss. The next lens could be about how simple it is to have a home business and other advantages like tax breaks.

Next, start to teach them about the various kinds of home businesses:

- Service businesses like electrician, computer programmer, and virtual assistant.
- Product/sales type of business, which include MLM or info product creation.

The next lens would discuss the advantages of working with a supply that will basically drop ship or deliver via email any orders directly to the customer or handle any of the technical part of the service business.

Also devote a lens to teach the advantages of residual income. Spend a good amount of time on this one because people don't really understand the advantages of doing something once and having it pay for a lifetime.

By the time they finish your step-by-step lens-to-lens pre-training, they will be all ready to know all about your particular MLM. At this point, they will hopefully have given you contact information on one of your live opt in forms on your lens requesting more information.

Educate Your Downline in a Peer-Based Social Setting

There is nothing quite as sad as having an excited new distributor with a hot new business opportunity and superior product line, who has no idea where to go first and what to do. Downline abandonment is a plague where the recruit suddenly feels alone with no idea why they can't get people to join their business.

The MLM sale pitch made it sound so easy.

Or they feel overwhelmed with too much information.

A new IBO needs access to two kinds of training - that of product sales training so they will know more about the benefits and features of their new product line and how to promote them.

Then, secondly – and most importantly – tips and advice to prepare them to be in business for themselves and create a downline that's just as motivated and educated as they are.

Ideally, you are training them to become independent of you, although you'll still reap the financial rewards of having them sign up under your name in the first place.

Each new prospect will need guidance and input in the many facets of being in business for themselves. While they may be excited and raring to go, maybe they have poor business practices that turn people off. For that, they'll need some personal skills development.

Or perhaps they need some guidance on how to reach new customers or approach prospects for their downline.

What's needed is a peer-based setting where you can effectively teach the various aspects of sales and marketing as well as pointing out materials which will help your new recruit grow as a sales person.

A good sales person is someone who has been trained to be a people person but not everyone is a natural at it.

The buzzword in the sales and marketing industry is Attraction Marketing. The fact is no one likes to be sold. The days of the fast talking, hard pitching salesman is gone. But the flip side is that everyone loves to *buy*!

The obvious solution to this dilemma is to make it easy for your prospect or customer to make a buying decision - which, in this case, is a "sign-up" decision.

The object is to teach your downline how to inform and *attract* customers and their own potential downline. There are several excellent books on the subject of attraction marketing but for this report we'll touch on how to use some attraction marketing methods with social media like Squidoo and Google Knols.

Squidoo lenses (and the same goes with Knols, WetPaint Wikis and Hub Pages) are an excellent way to provide training, advice, hints and tips in the form of training modules that teach the principles of attraction marketing.

Each lens or Knol can teach an important aspect of the bigger picture. Devise a step-by-step lesson plan, which leads your new prospect by the hand to learn how to be more effective in their sales and approaches.

Devote one lens for each bit of personal development. Teach them how to do what *you* do. You can feature books (available through Amazon.com, ClickBank or PayDotCom, for example) that will help cement that particular point. Then make sure to link these web 2.0 pages together in logical sequence.

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking on what to offer for training:

- How to prospect intelligently
- How to call your warm prospects
- How to develop their own lead generation system
- How to be a more personable person
- How to dress and act successfully
- How to demonstrate the flagship products (and so on...)

Most likely you joined an upline that has some form of training: books, tapes, brochures, and videos. Capitalize on that. Take the training that's available and make it easily accessible.

Tie them into any upline training that's appropriate or that wasn't covered in your own training program. Think of what questions you still had when you were new and didn't know what you were doing.

Nothing is stopping you from making your own training materials. Producing video is so simple now, and with a Flip video camera or Camtasia paired with YouTube, you can have a quick video up in no time.

Learn to use an autoresponder to capture emails and then keep in touch regularly. An autoresponder would almost be essential to keep tied in. Since you can't possibly talk to everyone in your downline once it grows, you should use regular email messages that feature a topic of interest or news, which in turn leads them to the main website or one of your lenses.

Be a leader of your downline by maintaining a website that's easily understandable. While most MLM programs have a "back room" for each IBO, that isn't the same as one that you would maintain to stay in touch with everyone in your downline.

As the leader of your own group, take the initiative and create a central site where your members can get the latest news and you can offer the newest training downloads in the form of mp3s and videos. You might try using Ning.com if you prefer the layout.

Have the key questions highlighted on the sidebar so that they're linked to other pages or other lenses. On these lenses, answer the questions and offer any helpful books, tapes or other training materials that will boost your new prospect's confidence and knowledge.

It's really simple to put together your own network of social networking pages that help to build your downline's knowledge base and make them feel confident in their decision to sign up with your opportunity.

Don't Forget to Sell Products on Your Web 2.0 Pages

It would seem that since you're a distributor for an MLM program which sells a great product that you should make it available for sale to your prospects as well as to passers-by.

All too often, network marketers are too intent on recruiting and leave out the all of the important reasons why you're in business in the first place - and that is to sell the core product.

So why not go all out and create product sales and/or information pages in a Squidoo lens or Knol? Let's say you want to sell water treatment systems with an MLM program. You'll do some keyword research on "water treatment," "filtered water," and "bottled water."

(You could do something similar with vitamins or herbs or a weight loss product, too.)

Now, take these seed keywords and create a list of long tail keyword phrases, as we did earlier, using Google Analytics keyword tool. From this list, create a lens on each keyword.

Eventually, if someone types in "best water treatment system" into Google, your goal is to be one of the top ten in the SERPs (search engine results pages).

Many people are just looking for a particular vitamin, herb or health product. You can create a review lens about the product or the health concern that the product you're promoting addresses, for example.

When you feature your product, you can approach in two ways: one is to directly advertise the product and list all of its features and leaving a "buy now" type of button in the lens.

This kind of lens is appropriate when your prospect has heard about your product line from a friend or in the news, and just wants to know more about it. They may already have a secure job and have zero interest in the biz opp portion of your program, but they're still interested buyers in the product itself!

This contributes to your money stream.

The other way, which is possibly more effective, is to write articles for your lens that feature the best aspects of your products. If you sell açai berry juice, then write articles that talk about açai berries and their benefits.

Or go about it in reverse. Why would someone want antioxidants? If they were looking for cancer prevention methods. You could start your lens talking about antioxidants and their benefits and introduce the açai berry extract.

Taking it one step further, you could write about immune system strength and how important it is and talk about how, among other things, açai berries are found to have immune building properties.

Have a text link lead to another article more particularly on açai berries, which will then have a link to your product sales page, or directly to the product sales page where you sell the extract and the business opportunity.

It's important not to jump in and sell your product line harshly up front, but to inform your reader of how important certain aspects of your product are. Educate your reader. It's important to not *sell* as much as *lead* them to buy when you're in a web 2.0 environment.

By sharing useful information, they will become convinced in their own mind about açai berries (or whatever it is that you're selling) and want to buy it from you because you took the time to tell them about it without all the hard sell.

But a more often overlooked way to attract customers is to offer your excellent product right alongside your business opportunity. This can be used a pre-recruiting tool, too. In you Squidoo lens, have a headline that alerts them to the fact they can make money promoting a product they already love!

While they landed on your lens because they were searching for information on the product, they're teased with the fact that it can have multiple benefits – good health (for example) *and* monetary perks! Lead them to a website you own or another lens you created with the biz opp portion of the process.

In that second lens, lead them through the educational process by leaving a bread crumb trail like you did before when you were recruiting warm prospects in the earlier chapter.

Can you see how all of these lenses link to one another one to create one large tutorial on MLM success? If the prospect is interested in more information about the product line, you just make sure to have those links conveniently located throughout you sites.

This interlinking helps to increase your own web presence and add to your perceived level of authority. The fact is that the BEST downlines are satisfied customers that decided to join your group. They can't help but spout good things about the product to everyone they know, and the fact that they make money at it is just icing on the cake.

Become a Trusted Leader in Your Niche

As you grow in your business, you will develop your own particular following, for lack of a better term. You see, people don't buy products; they buy solutions. If you were the one to help them find a solution, then that person will look to you as an authority figure.

This applies to offering them the business opportunity as well as any of the product line.

You have an opportunity, even a responsibility, to become a leader to your group as well as a trusted authority to your retail customers. Once you've been in the business for some length of time, you will have accumulated a vast amount of experience and knowledge that you can document and even sell to your downline.

This places you in the unique position of becoming an info product publisher, which is actually a very lucrative line of work if you handle it right. Now, you don't need to get anxious about the process of writing and publishing – it's very easy with modern technology to become a self published expert online.

You don't even need to be a good writer because you can outsource the writing. If you can write an email, then you can write a report and turn it into an info product.

If you do it yourself, you will simply accumulate and document information that your recruits or customers need. Once you've put it together into a Word document, it's a snap to turn it into a PDF file, which can then be easily shared or sold online through your lenses and other sites.

Your Two Audiences

You will have two groups to reach: potential business recruits and potential retail customers.

First, let's talk about how to publish for your recruits. There are whole MLM business recruiting systems based on attraction marketing principles that someone at one time developed for their own use and then eventually sold to their downline and others.

Nothing is stopping you from developing one of your own! As a matter of fact, you can model some that are already out there, but only with your own twist – don't plagiarize anyone else's work. You can buy an info product tutorial like Building an eBook Empire by Tiffany Dow and learn how to launch it from scratch.

Most of these systems include an initial report that is free or for a nominal charge. Those that offer it for a nominal price are doing two things: 1) Offsetting the cost of being in business and 2) filtering out the tire kickers and freebie seekers.

By charging \$7 to \$10 for this initial report, it gives your pre-recruit a small view of the bigger picture. It isn't hard to part with \$7 -10. And if the person is interested, they will go to the next step in your marketing funnel.

If they aren't, then you covered your costs with the low fee.

In this report, the reader learns the benefits of working from home and the kind of work from home businesses that are available. By the end of the free or low-cost report, he or she is ready to go to the next level, so then you have a link to another (paid) report or even to the whole system.

Once they are convinced that an MLM is the ideal business model, they are practically begging to find out what MLM you're part of, if you haven't yet told them. And in all reality, they have come to respect you and even desire a business relationship with you.

The beauty of it is that you only wrote the report once or published the lenses once and they work for you 24/7/365. Putting in a lot of work up front will pay off later in years of residual income.

And for your recruits, write out an entire attraction marketing system based on your own experience and then sell it to your downline. But then make it resalable or rebrandable so that they can make these reports for sale to their own downline.

They stay positive making at least enough to cover their costs, too.

Don't think this has to be a full-length book. Even a short report or several articles will suffice. And what's so great is that you probably already have the articles pre-written! Where? In your lenses, Knols, Hub Pages, WetPaint wikis, blog posts and autoresponders.

Nothing is stopping you from taking the same articles you have there and just reformatting them to work in a PDF file for sale.

This way you can add another bit perceived authority on your lens when you offer a free report or e-course on how to build a home-based business. Your lens helps build your credibility so that when you offer a free report, it's natural for your reader to grab it.

As to publishing for your retail business, make sure to create articles and reports on specific ingredients (vitamins, herbs, pressed carbon filtering, reasons to use these things).

Then within that report you have links to other lenses and other sites where you take them to the next level. You keep doing this until your shopper has bought your product or your reader has opted in to learn more about your MLM.

Since the report or lens or article is read online, just make sure to text link to your products so that your customer has no trouble getting it. Nothing is more frustrating to someone than to get all excited about the benefits of some product or service and then not have convenient access to it.

You'll want to have links from your retail product reports to lenses or other reports, teaching about "How you can make some extra cash selling these fine products."

Do you see how big this can get? Remember your best distributors come from happy, loyal retail customers. As a matter of fact, using a system of lenses and reports to build a relationship with your reader may be the most effective way to get a loyal downline.

Don't underestimate the power of the Internet to build your network marketing business. Adding new social media will make an impact on the number of prospects you're able to reach and how you're able to connect to them on a more personal level.



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