



## Digital marketing advice for Brokers, Letting Agents and Insurance Intermediaries



# INTRODUCTION

The aim of this guide is to provide useful **hints and tips** for those looking to increase traffic their website.

All of these valuable tips and ideas can be implemented with **little or no cost**, and will help you to secure more business by enhancing and expanding your web activities and exploring new online channels.

“ YOUR VISION  
YOUR IDEAS  
OUR EXPERTISE ”

# POST ON FORUMS



There are many forums and groups on the internet of like-minded folk discussing the property and rental markets.

Joining relevant forums is a good way of **keeping up to date with current industry issues, trends and changes to legislation**, as well as reading customer feedback and keeping an eye on competitor activity.


These forums give you the opportunity to communicate directly with your audience at no cost.

Done effectively, forums posts are also a **good way of transferring targeted traffic to your website.**

# POST ON FORUMS

## 1. HOW

You will need to **register as a member** for each forum or group that you wish to join.

Registration	
Please note that you will need to enter a valid e-mail address before your account is activated. You will receive an e-mail at the address you provide that contains an account activation link.	
<b>Username:</b> Length must be between 3 and 20 characters.	<input type="text"/>
<b>E-mail address:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Confirm e-mail address:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Password:</b> Must be between 6 and 30 characters.	<input type="text"/>
<b>Confirm password:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Language:</b>	British English 
<b>Timezone:</b>	[UTC] Western European Time, Greenwich Mean Time

You are usually able to create your own **signature link**. This is the 'footer' that gets displayed every time you create a post or reply to an existing post.

n 13 Posts 	generating links as well as referred traffic.
	I have a list that I recently wrote and it's published here:
	<a href="#">SEO Strategies and Inbound Marketing Best Practices for 2012   Kaiserthesage</a>
	You guys might find something that you can use there.
	BTW, happy new year everyone! 😊
	Search marketing and link development strategist at <a href="#">Affilorama</a> and <a href="#">Traffic Travis</a> . Offers <a href="#">SEO str</a> as <a href="#">link development services</a> on his personal blog. Also, you can follow me on Twitter <a href="#">@jasonacic</a>



# POST ON FORUMS

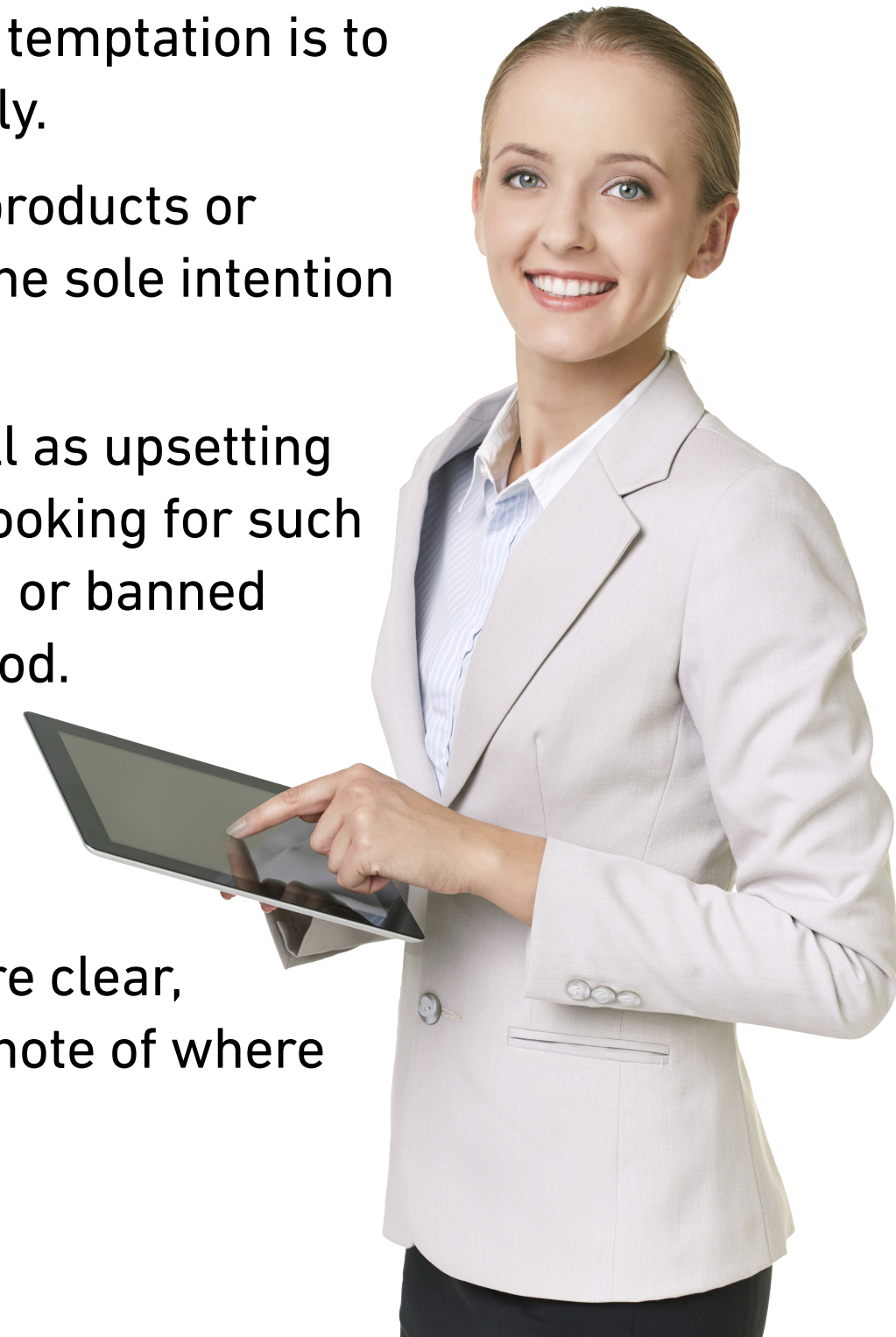
## 2. BE NATURAL

With 'forum marketing' it is better to go for the '**slowly, slowly catchy monkey**' approach, rather than going in gung-ho. The temptation is to make 'spam' posts, either deliberately, or inadvertently.

A spam post could either be a blatant 'plug' for your products or services, or could be a reply to an existing post with the sole intention of getting someone to click on your signature link.

Either way, these are considered **bad practice**. As well as upsetting forum regulars, most forums also have moderators looking for such activity, and it could end up with you being suspended or banned from the forum, doing your brand more harm than good.

The key to success is to immerse yourself in the forums and **answer posts as genuinely and insightfully as possible**. Do not make reference to your company unless it is relevant. If your answers are clear, thoughtful and useful, people will automatically take note of where you are from and look at your signature link.



# POST ON FORUMS

## BENEFITS

- 1** **Search engines love forums** and search them every day for content that is then picked up and ranked in results pages.
- 2** Posts on respectable industry forums pointing back to your website helps **boost your credibility.**
- 3** Posting genuinely useful information on forums can lead to customer referrals and you becoming a '**voice of authority**' on certain subjects.

# POST ON FORUMS

## BENEFITS

4

You can use forums to **keep up to date** with latest industry trends and issues.

5

Forums may also **give you ideas** for future articles and content

**Here are some forums you might find useful:**

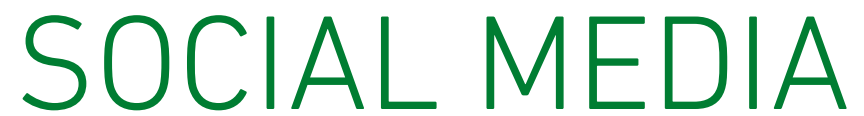
[www.landlordlaw.co.uk](http://www.landlordlaw.co.uk)

[www.propertytribes.com](http://www.propertytribes.com)

[www.landlordzone.co.uk](http://www.landlordzone.co.uk)

[www.property118.com](http://www.property118.com)





# SOCIAL MEDIA

Another **free tool** which can be easily utilised by brokers and agents is **social media**. Social media allows you to contact your customers quickly and regularly, providing a free customer service platform, as well as a way of keeping customers up to date with your latest deals and company news.

# What is Social Media?

*“A group of Internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content” – Andreas Kaplan*

*“A means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks” – Toni Ahlqvist*

*“Online tools and websites that encourage people to interact with companies, brands, and people” – Senior Net*





# SOCIAL MEDIA

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BUSINESSES?



- You can **connect to a large number of potential customers**
- Provides a **platform for relationships with existing** customers
- You can share news, **multi-media content** and provide customer service
- A **cost-effective** marketing resource
- Can drive traffic to your websites & **generate new leads.**
- It provides a platform where large numbers of **potential customers & clients** already 'hang out' online.

***“Whether you know it or not, your clients and prospective clients already seek you out in the social spheres” - Adrian Partners***

# FACEBOOK

What is it?

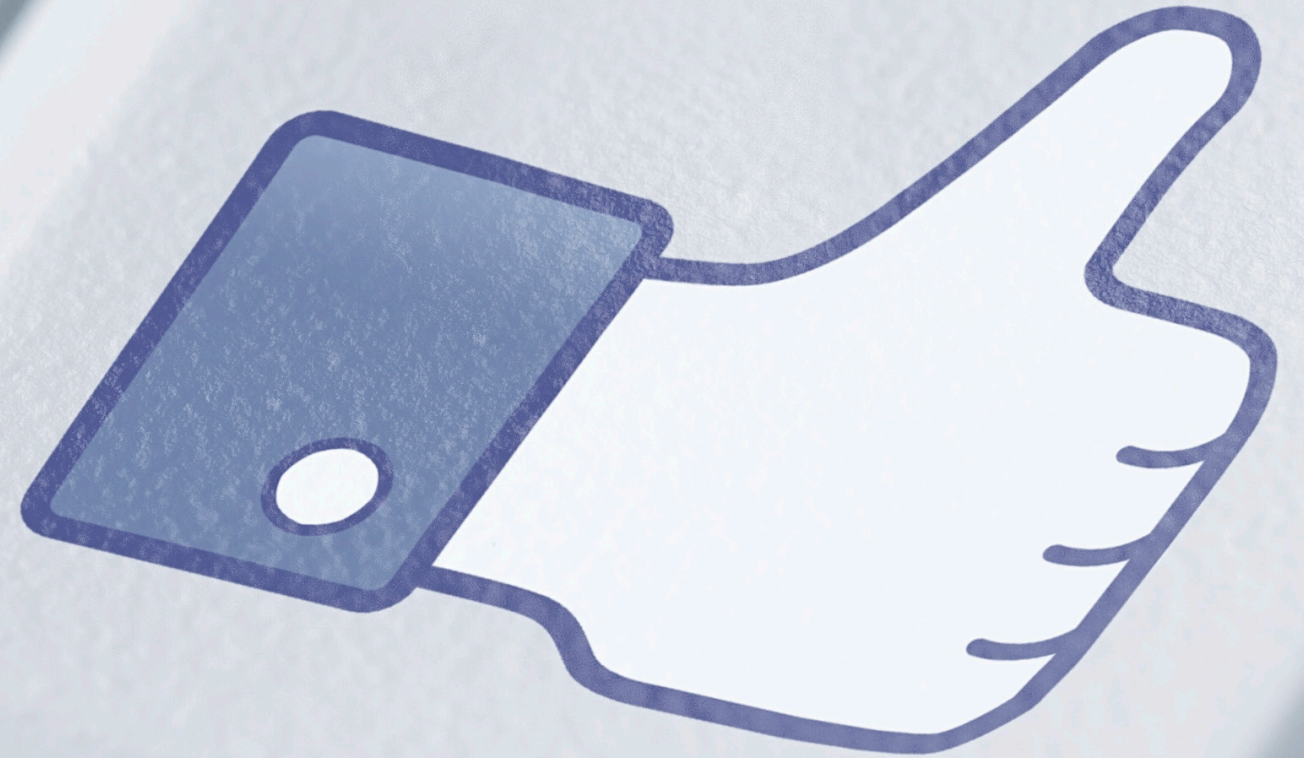


Facebook is still seen as ***the*** social media network. It has more members worldwide than any other platform, across a huge demographic of people, from teenagers to pensioners - meaning the possibilities for you are virtually endless.



# FACEBOOK

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



Build yourself a **company page** (this is a simple process, with Facebook itself running you through it step-by-step).

This is good way of building and establishing a community around your brand and products. However, you may have to be patient and also **promote your page** to build up the numbers and results you want to see.



# FACEBOOK

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



You can use Facebook to share 'status updates', links, videos, photographs and news about your company. These will appear on the 'feeds' of those who 'like' your page.

You should keep your messages **succinct and conversational** for the best results.

Facebook also provides another customer service platform for your business, **allowing customers to communicate directly with you online**. Make sure you keep up-to-date with such enquiries, and respond to them professionally and appropriately, as you would via email.

# FACEBOOK

## HANDY TIPS



For status updates, **posing questions and writing open statements** is the best approach. 'Likes' and comments for posts help them become a 'top story' and are therefore seen by a larger percentage of your audience.

Asking landlords 'What's the oddest thing a tenant has left behind?', to spark a discussion, for example, might be more effective for engagement than a post saying 'save 10% on your landlord fees'.



# FACEBOOK

## HANDY TIPS



You can purchase more Facebook traffic using their internal ads platform. This allows you to create **a simple advert** to target certain relevant groups of people – ie landlords – in the hope that they will become connected by ‘liking’ your page.

Make sure your page is **well maintained and updated regularly**, a dormant page may give the impression your business is no longer trading!

# FACEBOOK

## BOOST YOUR POSTS

- You can boost any post you share from your newsfeed, timeline or page, including status updates, photos, videos and offers.
- Any post you boost will appear higher in News Feed to help more people see it.
- Bear in mind that boosted posts must follow Facebook's Advertising Guidelines.

## HOW DO I BOOST A POST?

- 1) Got to any post you've recently created and then click Boost Post at the bottom of your post.
- 2) Choose your audience based on their interests, age and location and set your budget based on how many people you want to reach and how long you'd like the boost to run.
- 3) Click Boost Post

**It's simple as that!**

Sign up at:

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)



A screenshot of the Facebook audience targeting interface. It shows a location dropdown set to 'United Kingdom', an age range selector set to '35' to '64', a gender selector with 'All' selected, and an interests section with tags for 'landlords', 'Landlord', 'Landlord-tenant law', and 'Property'.

United Kingdom ×

Age 35 - 64

Gender All Men Women

Interests [?] landlords × Landlord × Landlord-tenant law × Property ×

# TWITTER

## WHAT IS IT?



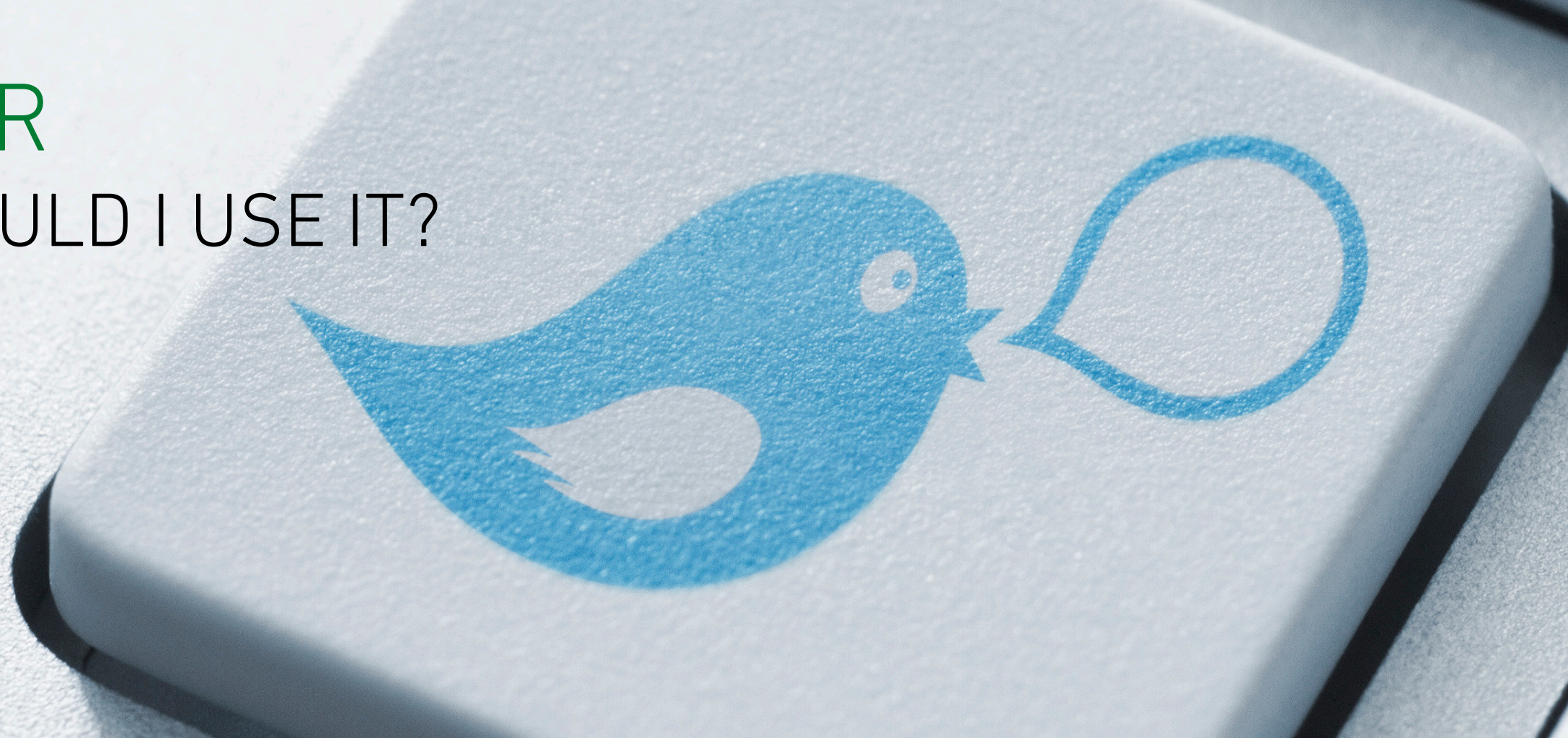
A '**microblogging**' platform which allows you to share pearls of wisdom in **140 characters or less**.

Twitter allows a quick and easy way to share news and updates with your audience – known as 'followers'.



# TWITTER

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



140 characters is not a lot of space to convey complex messages, so it's best not to try! **Keep your messages, short and sweet.** You can also post **photographs, links to your website,** or articles you have written, for example. This is good for driving traffic back to your website.

As with the forums, do not go for the hard sell - constantly bombarding your followers with why you are the greatest is likely to lead to you being 'un-followed'.



# TWITTER

## HANDY TIPS



**Pose questions** as well as statements, to encourage interaction with others. These don't have to directly relate to selling your products just encourage involvement and interaction with the brand.

Use relevant '**hash-tags**' i.e. #property and #insurance so that your name comes up for anyone searching that term.

Interact with other organisations/people by using @ in the hopes of generating conversation and getting articles 're-tweeted' by them (ie presented to their followers in addition to yours).



# TWITTER

## PROMOTED TWEETS

Promoted tweets are ordinary Tweets financially boosted by advertisers who want to reach a wider group of users or to spark engagement from their existing followers.

They are clearly labelled as promoted when an advertiser is paying for their placement on Twitter.

Promoted Tweets act just like regular tweets and can be retweeted, replied to, favourited and more.

Sign up at:  
[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)





# LINKEDIN

WHAT IS IT?

**LinkedIn** is often called the Facebook of the **business community**.

# LINKEDIN

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



In a similar way to Facebook, you can create a **company page** from which you can share links to your content and products.

However, unlike Facebook, LinkedIn is strictly '**business only**', so therefore a much better place to meet **potential clients** and prospective investors.

You can also use it to conduct free polls to gauge public/customer opinion on a range of questions and join groups of common interest.

Sign up at:  
<http://www.linkedin.com/companies>

## OTHER PLATFORMS YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER ARE:



Instagram - An easy to use photo sharing site



Pinterest - A bookmark tool that allows you to discover and share creative ideas with your customers



Google+ - Allows you to create a company email similar to facebook



Vine - Allows you to create short creative looped videos

# YOUTUBE

## WHAT IS IT?



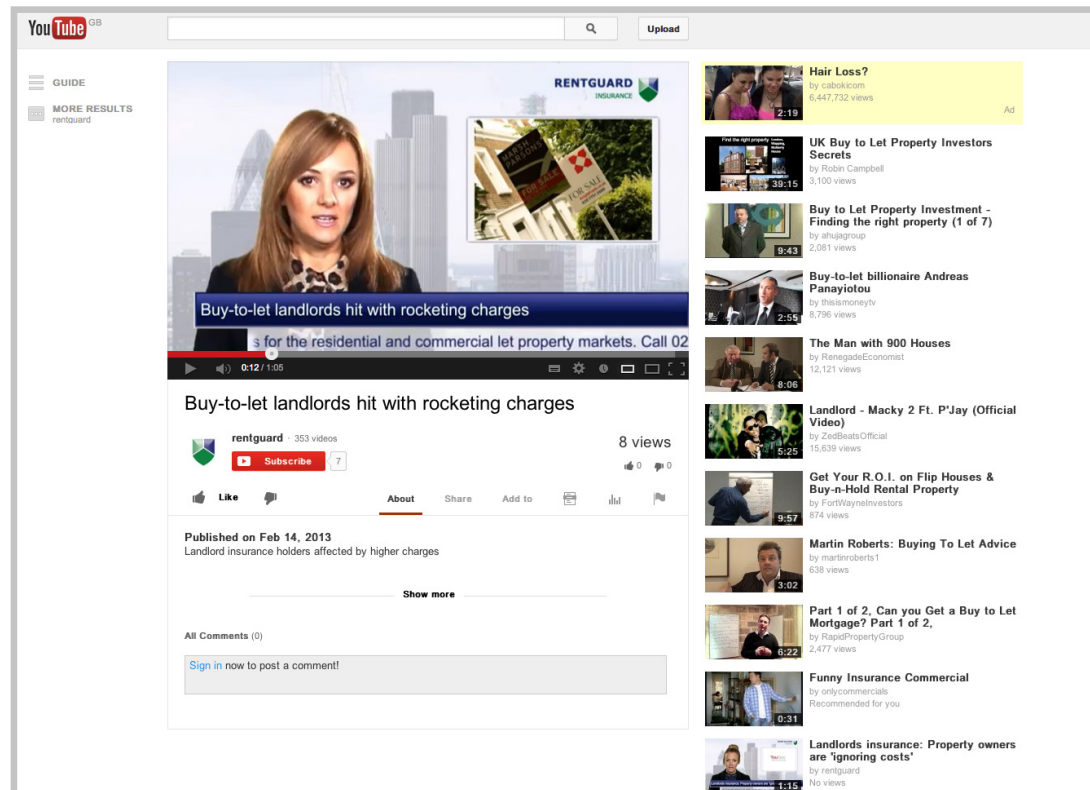
Youtube is all about **video**! It is a **free platform** where you can upload videos about your products and services.

Youtube is also the **second most popular search engine in the UK** (after Google), meaning that people actively search youtube for information, not just to enjoy videos of cute cats!



# YOUTUBE

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



Start simple, create an 'about us' video for your company, as a kind of commercial or **calling card for your business**. Include a little bit about the history and make-up of your company, plus its products and services.

Using Google, you can find literally thousands of companies that offer video-making services to choose from and they may be cheaper than you think. Or with a handy cam and a simple program such as Windows Movie Maker you can have a go yourself.

However remember that you want a professional looking video to reflect the nature of your company, so it may be worth investing properly in it.

# YOUTUBE

## HOW SHOULD I USE IT?



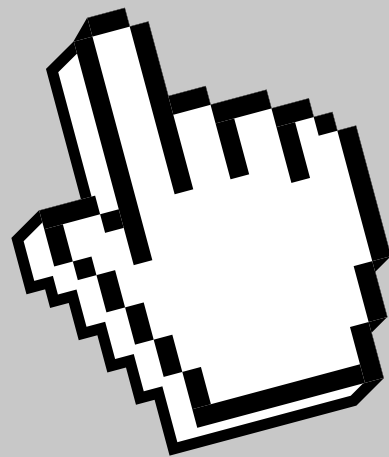
Upload your video to Youtube and then share it via email and social media. You can also embed it on your website, for visitors to watch directly on your homepage.

Then, when you are feeling more confident, choose a subject that you would like to create a video or series of videos about.

This helps **increase traffic to your website**, and again will help to make you an authority figure in your market.

Sign up at:

<http://www.youtube.com/yt/creators/playbook.html>



# PPC

## WHAT IS IT?

PPC stands for **pay-per-click**, a model of internet marketing in which advertisers pay a fee each time one of their ads is clicked.

Search engine advertising is one of the most popular forms of PPC. It allows advertisers to bid for ad placement in a search engine's sponsored links when someone searches on a keyword.

A lot goes into building a winning PPC campaign: from researching and **selecting the right keywords**, to organising those keywords into well-organised campaigns and ad groups, to setting up PPC landing pages that are optimised for conversions.

# PPC

## WHAT IS GOOGLE ADWORDS?

Google AdWords is the single most popular PPC advertising system in the world. The AdWords platform enables businesses to **create adverts that appear on Google's search engine** and other partnered websites.

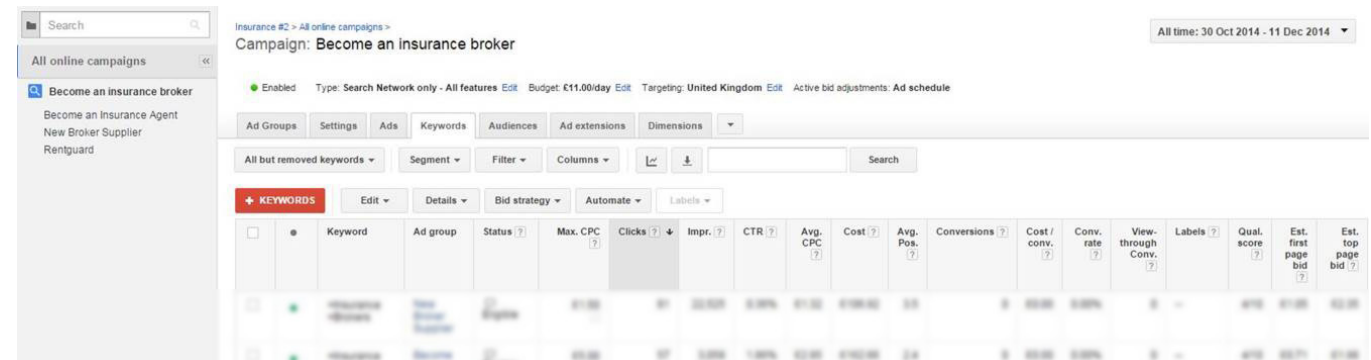
AdWords operates on a PPC model, in which users bid on keywords and pay for each click on their advertisements. Every time a search is made, Google digs into the pool of AdWords advertisers and chooses a set of winners to appear in the ad space on its search results page.

The '**winning bidders**' are chosen based on a combination of factors, including the quality and relevance of the landing page and keywords, as well as the size of their keyword bids.

Google AdWords

# PPC

## HOW IT WORKS



The screenshot displays the Google Ads interface for a campaign named 'Become an insurance broker'. The left sidebar shows a list of campaigns, with 'Become an insurance broker' selected. The main area shows campaign details: 'Enabled', 'Type: Search Network only', 'All features: Edit', 'Budget: £11.00/day', 'Targeting: United Kingdom', and 'Active bid adjustments: Ad schedule'. Below this, there are tabs for 'Ad Groups', 'Settings', 'Ads', 'Keywords', 'Audiences', 'Ad extensions', and 'Dimensions'. The 'Keywords' tab is active, showing a table of keywords with columns for 'Keyword', 'Ad group', 'Status', 'Max. CPC', 'Clicks', 'Impr.', 'CTR', 'Avg. CPC', 'Cost', 'Avg. Pos.', 'Conversions', 'Cost / conv.', 'Conv. rate', 'View-through Conv.', 'Labels', 'Qual. score', 'Est. first page bid', and 'Est. top page bid'. The table contains two rows of data.

Keyword	Ad group	Status	Max. CPC	Clicks	Impr.	CTR	Avg. CPC	Cost	Avg. Pos.	Conversions	Cost / conv.	Conv. rate	View-through Conv.	Labels	Qual. score	Est. first page bid	Est. top page bid
insurance broker	New Broker Supplier	On	£1.00	10	1000	1.00%	£1.00	£10.00	1.0	0	£0.00	0.00%	0	-	4.0	£1.00	£2.00
insurance broker	Rentguard	On	£0.50	5	500	1.00%	£0.50	£5.00	1.0	0	£0.00	0.00%	0	-	4.0	£0.50	£1.00

Specifically, who gets to appear on the page is based on an advertiser's **Ad Rank**, a metric calculated by multiplying two key factors – **CPC bid** (Cost-per-click and the highest amount an advertiser is willing to spend) and **Quality Score** (a value that takes into account your click-through rate, relevance and landing page quality).

This allows winning advertisers to reach potential customers at a cost that fits their budget. It's essentially an auction.

While a number of factors determine how successful your PPC advertising campaign will be, you can achieve a lot by focusing on:

- Keyword relevance: creating relevant PPC keyword lists, keyword groups and compelling ad text
- Landing page quality: creating optimised landing pages with persuasive, relevant content and a clear call-to-action, tailored to specific search queries.
- Quality score: is Google's rating of quality and relevance of keywords, landing pages, and PPC campaigns. The higher the Quality Scores the more ad clicks you will receive.

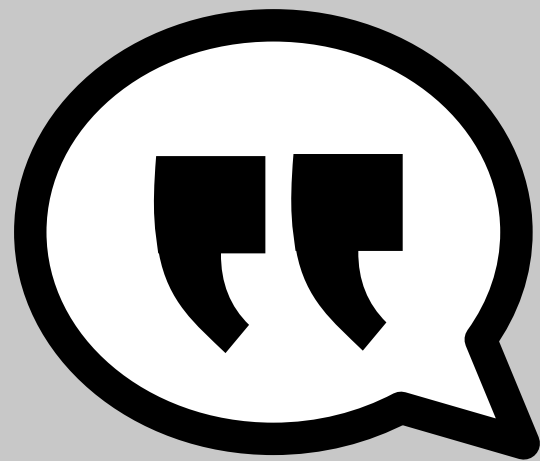
# PPC

## BING ADS

- Is a service that provides pay-per-click advertising on Bing, Yahoo and MSN search engines.
- Similar to Google AdWords, Bing Ads uses both the maximum amount an advertiser is willing to pay-per-click on their ad and the advertisement's click-through rate to determine how often an advertisement is shown.

bing Ads





# TESTIMONIALS

One of the most fundamental questions your website can answer is: **What do people who've purchased and used your product or service think about it?**

Customer testimonials are a simple and effective way to show this.

The easiest way to do this is by selecting a few quotes from complimentary customer emails you have received and put them on your home page or on a designated page, see an example below:

***"Thank you for not only saving me money, but for making the whole process quick and easy"***

***James, Watford***

# TESTIMONIALS

## WHY USE CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS?

■ **They build trust** – 62% of consumers claim they're more likely to do business with a company after reading a positive review.

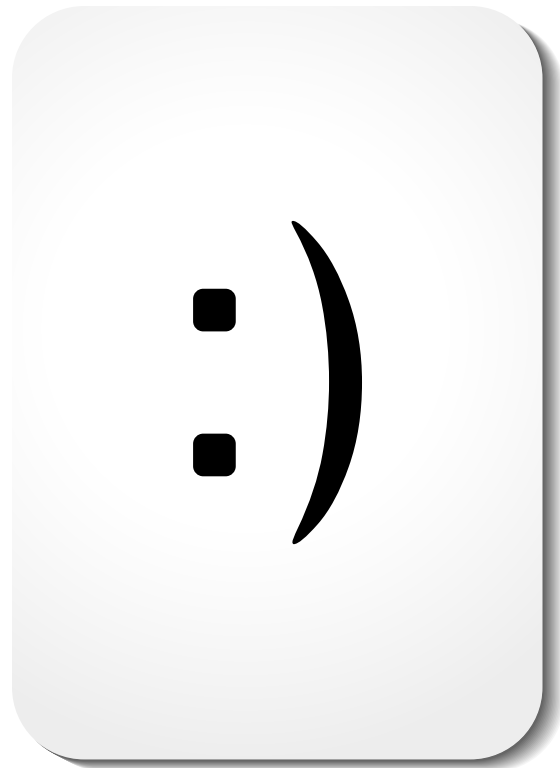
■ **They aren't overly 'salesy'** – because they aren't written in your 'voice', testimonials stand out from the rest of your website and customers perceive them as more unbiased.

■ **They help overcome scepticism.** A good testimonial has the power to convince visitors that your product or service really made a difference to your customer's life and can do the same for them.



# TESTIMONIALS

## CUSTOMER REVIEWS

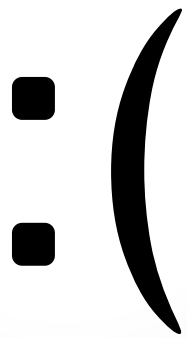


You may also wish to look into paid for customer reviews services, such as the ones provided by **Trustpilot** or **Feefo**. These services will send purchasers an email inviting them to review their experience with you and give them the opportunity to leave a relevant comment.

This will give you an average score which is also displayed by your name in google searches, and can help boost the credibility of your organisation.

# TESTIMONIALS

## BUT WHAT ABOUT NEGATIVE REVIEWS?



In an ideal world, all of your reviews would be glowing ones, but realistically you are going to get customers with minor niggles and disappointments. But don't worry, responding quickly and courteously to negative reviews and solving any problems they may have, is a good way of displaying your efficient customer service.

It is also a good idea to regularly search your company name to see what people are saying about you on forums and other platforms, and respond where necessary.





# ARTICLE MARKETING

There are many benefits to article marketing. Firstly, relevant and regularly updated content is **good for search engines**. But also it shows visitors that **your website is fresh** and constantly maintained, meaning they are **more likely to return**.



# ARTICLE MARKETING

## DEMONSTRATE YOUR EXPERTISE



Your articles should demonstrate to the reader that you know what you are talking about to **help build up trust**.

With more and more choice available, building up trust in your brand is important.

# ARTICLE MARKETING

## WRITING AN ARTICLE



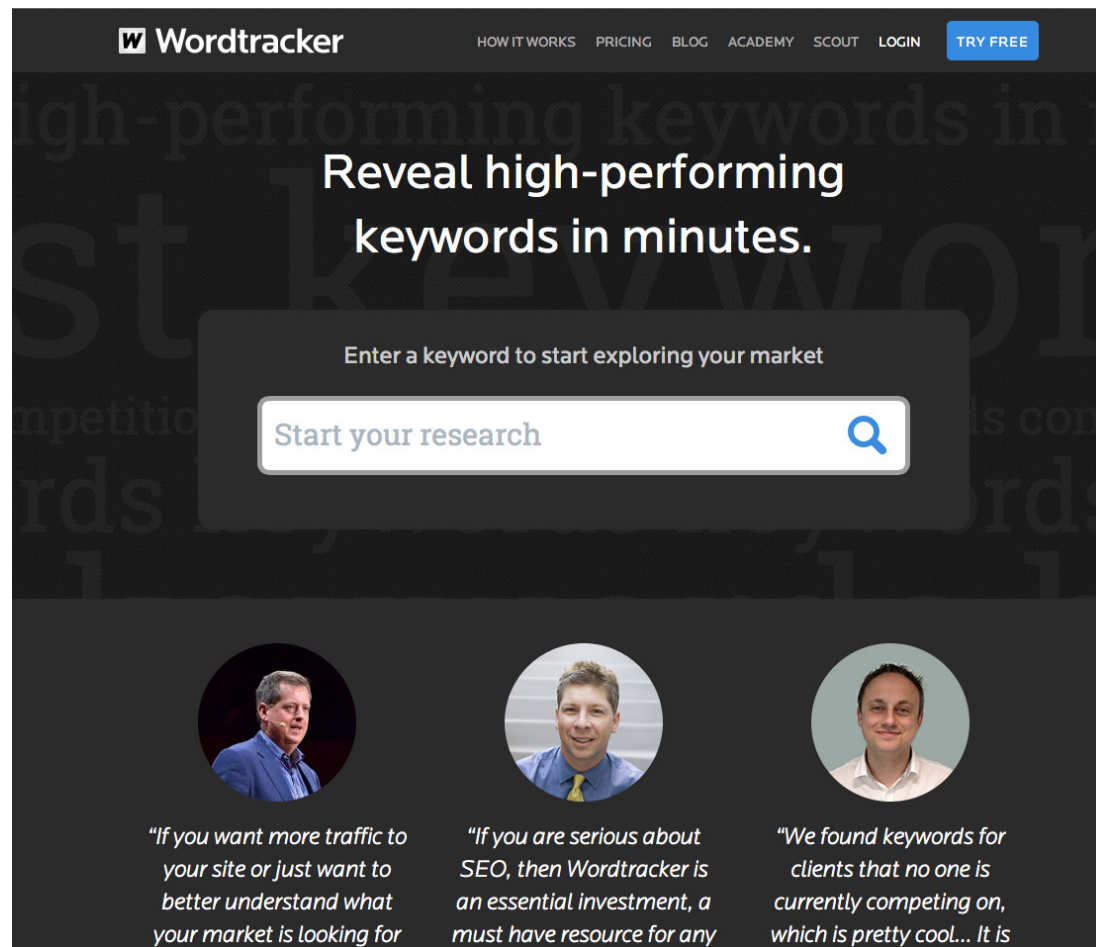
Decide on a relevant subject that you feel **passionate** or **knowledgeable** about, which you would like to cover. Think about the purpose of the article, what do you want people to do once they have read it? share it? comment? buy?

You should try to write about a subject that is well 'searched' on the web.



# ARTICLE MARKETING

## WRITING AN ARTICLE



**Word Tracker** (<http://www.wordtracker.com>) – helps you to find relevant keywords for your business, allowing you to then create traffic friendly content.

Once you have decided what term or subject you want to write about. It is important to **research the area thoroughly**. Well-rounded and researched articles will project a good image of your brand, but conversely, ill-informed or controversial articles could do more damage than good.

Once you have written the article, ensure that it is free of typos, spelling mistakes and grammatical errors before publishing, again the **professionalism of your article reflects that of your business!**

# ARTICLE MARKETING

## HOW AND WHERE TO PUBLISH



### Blogger

<http://blogger.com>

Blogger is a free site which allows you to publish content. The page can be branded and linked to your website. Its **user friendly** interface allows you to easily add images and headlines to your article.



### Go Articles

<http://www.goarticles.com>

Here you can submit articles on **massive range of subjects** and link back to your website.





Now  
Selling

BROKERS WELCOME

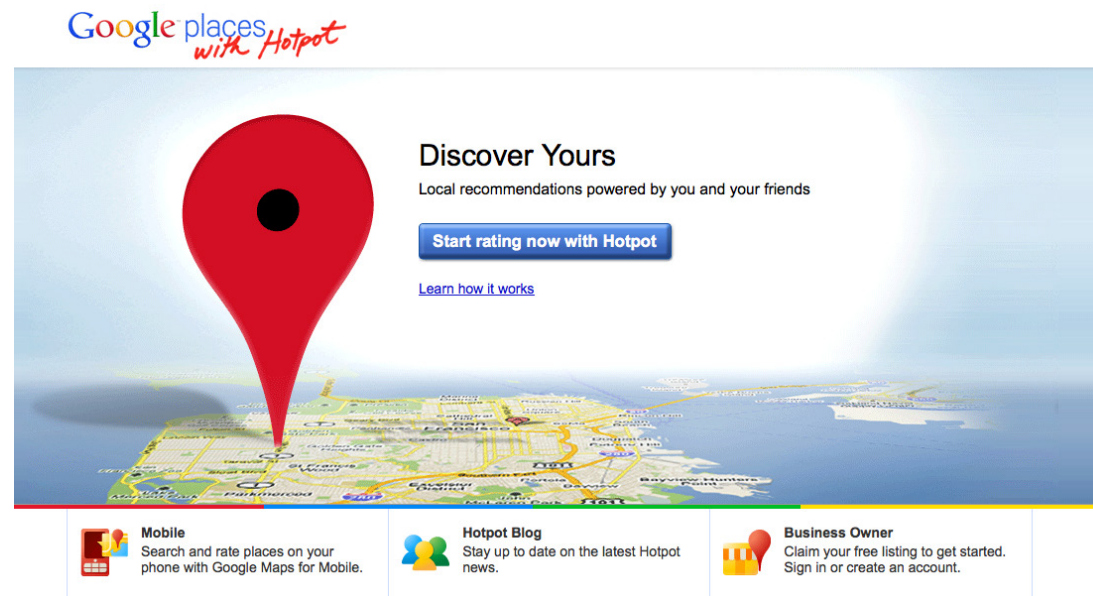
# LOCAL ADVERTISING

There could be a lot of **untapped business** right under your nose. By taking the steps that your competitors aren't you can gain an **advantage** in your local area.



# LOCAL ADVERTISING

## GOOGLE



When a user adds a location to their search engine term, ie 'landlord insurance Sussex', a different set of search results appear. At the top of the page, 5-10 relevant local businesses will appear. This is called **local search**.

The easiest way to get yourself on the map is to sign up for a **Google Places** account. It is free to use and Google are putting increasing effort into integrating the results within its main search, so it is now more important than ever that you are listed.

# LOCAL ADVERTISING

## GOOGLE

Google will guide you through the process of setting up a places account, however you will need to validate your address by receiving a postcard sent to the registered address. This is to prevent spammers setting up accounts across the country so that they appear in listings everywhere.

Don't be tempted to do this, it will result in your business being 'blacklisted' by Google.

Get started at:  
[www.google.com/places](http://www.google.com/places)



### Handy Tips

Bing and Yahoo search engines also use a local search facility. You can sign up for their service at:

<http://primeplace.nokia.com>

You can also add photos and customer testimonials to your listing.

# LOCAL ADVERTISING

## EXTRAS



### What else can I do?

1. Write **articles** about the local area
2. Submit **press releases** to the local press
3. Get yourself **listed** on other local businesses websites
4. Get listed in **local business directories**
5. Get listed in **local networking groups**





## OTHER IDEAS

Here are some other simple steps you can take to maximise your business's profile and potential.

# COMPANY NEWSLETTER



You may also want to **contact your customers** from time to time by email in the form of a **newsletter** letting them know about developments that are going on within the company/industry and any special offers you may have running.

# COMPANY NEWSLETTER



Here are some ideas of what to include:

- **Awards** won by employees
- New **staff appointments**
- Any good **press coverage** your company may have recently received
- Details of new **products or services** you have launched
- Have you launched a **new product** or service?
- Changes in **opening hours** and pricing
- **Special offers**
- Charity work and fundraising undertaken by your staff in the **community**
- National or regional **survey results** that relate to your business



# A PRESS KIT



## A press kit could include:

- A short description and biography
- Screenshots or high resolution images such as company logo or premises
- Copies of existing press coverage / short testimonials
- Company fact sheet

It is best to send all this in one zip file, or **create one page for press on your website** that you easily can link to.



# PRESS RELEASES



In addition to your newsletter, you may want to update the press about things going on with your business that you feel are important to the **local area** by creating a press release.

You can email this to local press contacts and newsdesks - the addresses of which can be usually be found on their website.

Further to this you can also:

- Add it to your website
- Submit it to **pressbox.co.uk**
- Submit it to your local Chamber of Commerce
- Submit it to **pressreleasesyndication.co.uk**
- Submit it to relevant forums  
(be careful not to 'spam')

All of this will help to drive more traffic to your website.

# EMAIL MARKETING



One avenue of communication that is often **overlooked** is email. Most brokers don't have the facility to be able to contact their customers and clients in one go, but **it isn't as difficult as you may think.**

# EMAIL MARKETING

## WHAT CAN I USE EMAIL MARKETING FOR?



- To send out details of **promotions**
- To update customers of **changes** to policy and procedure
- To send out a **company newsletter**
- To provide your customers with **hints and tips**
- Surveys – canvas the **opinions** of your customer base

# EMAIL MARKETING

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?



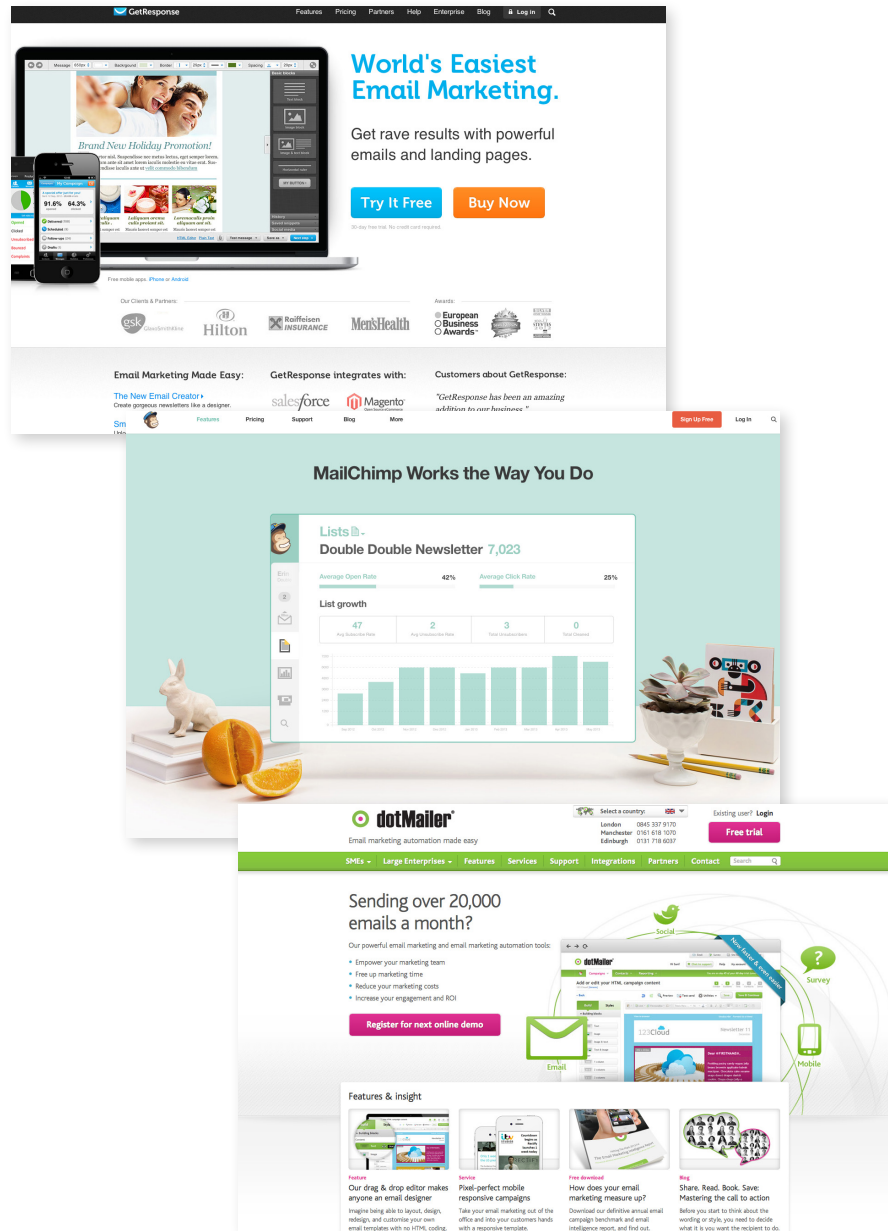
- Can be scaled depending on the size of your business
- It is **relatively cheap compared to other ways of communicating such as traditional direct mail** emails
- Quick – **instant delivery** of your message
- **Can be tracked** – you can see how many people have opened and shared your email etc
- It is **environmentally friendly** compared to traditional post

For best-practice advice on email marketing, including the legal do's & don'ts, visit: [ico.org.uk](http://ico.org.uk)



# EMAIL MARKETING

## WHERE DO I START?



Firstly you will need to get all of your customer's details into one file – an Excel spreadsheet for example. This might seem daunting, and can be time consuming, but is **well worth the effort**, as once it is there, it can be used again and again, and added to as and when you need to.

Here are some low-cost solutions for managing and sending emails:

[www.getresponse.com](http://www.getresponse.com)

[www.mailchimp.com](http://www.mailchimp.com)

(can send up to 1,000 emails for free)

[www.dotmailer.com](http://www.dotmailer.com)

These providers help you design, send and track your emails.

# EMAIL MARKETING

## HOW DO I GROW MY CONTACT LIST?



Add a subscription box to all the pages of your website encouraging people to sign up to your mailing list.

Add an archive copy of a newsletter to your page or an example of an exclusive offer, so that people can see what they are signing up to.

Offer an incentive for people signing up, such as a discounted rate or entry into a prize draw.

# EMAIL MARKETING

## HOW DO I GROW MY CONTACT LIST?



- Ask your current subscribers to pass your email on to others who might be interested.
- Attend relevant exhibitions and collect email addresses of the people you meet.
- Add a sign up line to your email signature, so that all of your emails also advertise the opportunity

Done well, **the benefits and opportunities of email marketing are numerous**, it provides a **cheap** and **effective line of communication** with existing customers, as well as the chance to attract new ones.





# WE ARE HERE TO HELP

There are many exciting opportunities for you to hone and expand your brand through marketing, you need to be dedicated and focussed to make it work, but above all, have fun doing it!

Please email us at **[marketing@rentguard.co.uk](mailto:marketing@rentguard.co.uk)** to let us know if you have found this guide useful, or if there are any other subjects you would like us to cover. We will be happy to try and help!





rentguard.co.uk | marketing@rentguard.co.uk | Tel: 0800 783 1626