

Online Marketing Tactics

Blog/Microblogging

Pro's	Con's
Can be archived	Can be time consuming
Develop stronger relationships and loyalty due to frequency and information	Long payoff over time
Feedback (+/-) and additional content building by visitors	Requires lot of content – something valuable to say frequently
Allows you to make announcements to people who are already listening	
Your very own soapbox	

When to use: You like to write, have a lot of information you can talk about, want to keep in touch with people to develop 'expert status', helps your business to report on a subject matter or review products

Videos

Pro's	Con's
Allows live demonstration – especially "how to"	Not necessarily good for "professional" services – depends on target market
People can 'relate' better to a live person than writing (get to know you more intimately) like a first impression	Can be expensive to produce a high quality videos
Faster conveyance of relationship/personality	Limited amount of time unless broken into segments if using YouTube
Wide distribution (such as YouTube)	Can be time consuming if in-depth video unless using video production company
Allows users to share you with others	
Can be hosted on your site, another site/blog or YouTube	
Can be fast and easy to create	

When to use: unique product/service, you're the product/service people are buying and knowing what you're like is an important factor in decision making, can't explain product/service as effectively in writing, have a way to record and post/host at level of quality that makes a good impression

Banner Ads

Pro's	Con's
Generates broad awareness or targeted awareness	Usually low click through rate
Promote discounts/special offers/one time	Can be expensive to create

When to use: When you want to generate general brand awareness, or focused advertising on select sites, promote something timely, have sufficient budget to produce ad and post

PPC

Pro's	Con's
Great for testing markets/messages	Can be costly if not well implemented
Fast and easy to get started, change	More costly/competitive for best keywords in your segment
Can turn on/off quickly little interruption of service	Some people have learned to ignore PPC messages, want the organic stuff

Can be quite focused	
----------------------	--

When to use: want to test messages, need easy and quick to implement tools, like flexibility of making changes, clients can be reached in tight niche instead of spread out too broadly, fast response (don't have to wait for people to find you organically)

E-zine/newsletter

Pro's	Con's
Way of frequently communicating with your audience	Can be a lot of work/effort
Good for building customer loyalty, expert status	Unless you outsource it, every minute you're writing, you're not selling/producing sales
Lists can be valuable	People ignore after awhile
Allows you to promote seasonally, evolving inventory or monthly specials	Hard to get new people to join – so many newsletters out there

When to use: ideally when you already have a good customer base and want to keep in touch regularly, have time and skills to produce 1x/month or quarterly at least, you have something of value to tell people frequently (no more than 1x/week)

Article Publishing Sites

Pro's	Con's
Lots of exposure, searchable	At the mercy of the editor to produce
Can create in content links to your site/products	Not well organized, up to mercy of search to find your article for people
No cost	No immediacy – can take forever

When to use: you are an expert and have unique content, don't need quick response, more long-term strategy for building credibility

Online Discussion Groups/Forums

Pro's	Con's
Targeted group, easy to reach	Not always appropriate to "sell" yourself
No cost to join	Long-term, have to wait for right opportunity to introduce message
Can be fun if you have a passion for the subject and like helping others without immediate return	Not easily found by people outside of group, so your work is limited to select audience

When to use: best to use this if you're already part of a group or can easily see yourself joining one and listening to messages/contributing without need to sell, not a quick payback here

Social Networking (Facebook/LinkedIn)

Pro's	Con's
Cross relationship building – you know so and so, so do I – opens doors, credibility	People don't like blatant selling
Can search in variety of ways for people	One-on-one selling, time consuming
Nice place to create a group/followers	More personal, less business like interactions – can't always expect to sell

When to use: Long term strategy, hen a lot of one-on-one interactions are best for your service, if you're popular or know a lot of people who know a lot of people, as a way to announce events

Affiliate Programs

Pro's	Con's
Leverage the power of other bodies to sell	Give up portion of profits
Can get wide reach quickly	Somewhat complex to implement and administer without service

When to use: Best if you have a product that's pre-packed (ebook, software product) and even better if it's distributed online, you have enough of a margin to give up to 50% to other people, great for spreading widely across internet

Organic Search

Pro's	Con's
Trustworthy, credibility	Long-term strategy
No direct cost	Takes a lot of unique content, targeted niche, understanding of search bots
	Can require a lot of effort/writing

When to use: when you work in a targeted niche, have a select and unique product/service, enjoy writing content, have 10+ hours per week to devote to your site or can pay for someone to devote time to your site

SEO

Pro's	Con's
Credibility when ranked highly	Hard to maintain as formulas change regularly
Utilize what you already have in place	Requires expertise or software

When to use: if your website is significant (50+ pages, 5+ million sales), or very small niche and you're expert in field, web is significant part (>50%) of your business strategy

Local search

Pro's	Con's
Customers can find where you are, come visit you	Doesn't work if you work from home or have customers in geographically diverse areas
Usually no cost	Negative feedback can hurt your image
Positive feedback can boost sales/visitors	

When to use: your customers and you are in a tight area and you want people to come in, almost no retail store should ignore local search on big 4 sites (Yelp, Yahoo, Google, Bing and AOL)

Podcast

Pro's	Con's
Can be easy to create and distribute	Not a high penetration in older generation, market
Allows customers to listen at their leisure	Not always best medium for your message – audio primarily
Can be extensive information/message	Not easily searchable, harder to find
People can listen at times when they couldn't read (in the car)	Not everyone has software to listen to

When to use: Audience is mobile, likely to have software and technology to utilize information, people want to take you in longer doses (information/data, not ads), time is not of the essence

Webinars

Pro's	Con's
Can be put together relatively quickly and inexpensively	Need to do sizable publicizing effort to attract audience
Reach diverse crowd	Not as high touch and impactful as in-person meetings/promo can be
Can be recorded and re-sold	No as easy to see if audience is understanding message/content/pace

When to use: people can't meet you where you are, reach broader, distributed audience, information can be conveyed online and users can get there, generally 30 minutes to 2 hours of information tops, unless an on-going class people have pre-paid for.

eBooks

Pro's	Con's
Position yourself as expert	Can be time consuming if you don't have content already
Can be resold through affiliate channels	Must be actively promoted to sell
Another means of making revenue from content	Run the risk of copyright infringement

When to use: people want to be able to download and walk away with the information (probably printed), how to do something has many steps or complex programs, position yourself as expert with a book

Press releases

When to use: Timeline information, need to reach broad spectrum of people, newsworthy content to convey – use for news, not necessarily promotion

Online interviews

Pro's	Con's
Positions you as expert	Can appear novice if not done of high enough quality
Can appear unbiased, more trustworthy	Not easily searchable, people have to already know you usually
Relatively easy to implement	

When to use: you want to convey information about a topic and appear to be an expert, you have a decent technology and setting for the video and you can stream video from your site or post to YouTube.