What Is The Definition Of Internet Marketing

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In the past few years, everyone has been going on and on about marketing businesses and products online, but what exactly is the definition of internet marketing? Is it as simple as throwing up a website and emailing a few people about it? Well, yes and no. So far, the definition of what constitutes internet marketing isn't really set, but there are some things people agree on.
First, it's not always necessary to have a website to do internet marketing. It's very useful, yes, and you'll get many more customers if you have one. However, you can send out emails, participate in message board discussions, and even join chat rooms to market your products and services without ever making a website.
One aspect of internet marketing that doesn't really work, despite what your email inbox might show, is spam. Well, spamming messages and emails, anyway (there are other types that are somewhat useful). Yes, emailing people about your products is a good marketing idea, but if the recipient doesn't want to know about what you have to offer, he or she will simply mark your email as spam. Be sure the people you email actually want to get your emails before you send them.
So what's good spam, then? It really depends on how you look at it. One popular practice of getting your site out there is to read people's blogs and post comments, then add your site link in either the name area or at the end of your post. Since you're actually responding to what they say, it's not exactly spamming. On the other hand, you're writing a comment more or less just to get your site's link on the blog, so it is spam in a way.
Is spam even in the definition of internet marketing then? Again, it's really hard to say. Certainly sending mass emails to people who don't care about your service isn't useful and a waste, but sometimes posting on message boards and blogs brings people to your site.
Another dubious method of internet marketing lies with social networks like MySpace and Facebook. Starting a profile on these sites for your products or services can bring in hundreds of new customers since these sites have millions of people on them. However, adding people to your friends list just to get your name out there is, to some, more obnoxious spamming that isn't welcome.
What it all comes down to is that you want to get your name and website, if you have one, out to as many people online as you can, but you don't want to be annoying about it. That's where internet marketing is really different from offline marketing. Flyers, billboards, and ads in newspapers are much more easily ignored than popup ads, spam emails, and hundreds of friend requests on MySpace.
Basically, when it comes to online marketing, a good rule to remember is that if you wouldn't want to see it, don't send or post it. If you're selling pet related products, for example, you probably shouldn't send a friend request to someone who says they don't like animals. All in all, "don't spam" seems to be perhaps the best definition of internet marketing out there.