



Leveraging the Power of Competition

7 Surefire Ways to Funnel Traffic & Profits from your Competitors!



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Your competitors have already achieved top search engine rankings, developed hundreds of pages of content, built massive email lists and dominated the social marketing space...

How can you possibly compete with that?

Most people approach competition with one of two mindsets: fight or flight. You either take one look at the competition and give up - choosing a less competitive niche, or you decide you're going to beat them out of the SERPs and give them a run for their money.

Either of those positions will cheat you out of the *true* profit potential in any niche. You're giving your "competition" entirely too much credit. If you're intimidated, then they win. That's exactly where they want you.

One simple shift can give you the edge you need to dominate any niche, no matter how competitive it appears. That shift being your *approach*. Instead of looking at how they could beat you, or you them, look for ways to leverage their position in the market.

Saturated, competitive niches are brimming with opportunity!

It's easy to look at competition as a deterrent, but there is actually a goldmine of opportunity there. Knowing this, and acting on it, will ultimately put you in the top percent in any niche.

In addition to the obvious high demand, there are other advantages to working in a more competitive niche, including:

- Higher Ad Revenue
- Higher AdSense Payout
- More Affiliates to Recruit
- More Affiliate Programs
- More Joint Venture Partners
- More Quality Link Partners

Next we'll look at 7 very simple ways you can strategically use competition to your advantage in practically any niche.

By the time you finish reading this, you'll never look at your so-called competitors the same...

Top Search Engine Rankings

A common mistake is to look at the total number of search results for any given keyword phrase. This is not an accurate assessment of the competition for that phrase. You are only competing with the top 10 pages that show up in the search results. Period. Because that is where you want to be.

Analyze the top 10 results for a keyword phrase search carefully. Look at ways you can get your link on all or any of the 10 pages already displayed there.

Instead of searching commercial keyword phrases, and looking at your direct competitors, try related keyword phrases that are informational searches. For example, if you sell pet supplies look at search results for pet tips.

The current #1 Result on Google for "pet tips" blatantly requests submissions:

Pet Articles and Pet Care Tips

General Pet Tips

This section is divided into tips on bringing home a new pet, pet safety, and miscellaneous tips. If you have one of your own to share, you're welcome to [send it for consideration](#).

Your New Pet

- [Preparing to Bring Home a New Pet](#)

Getting links from even half of these pages, which are very obviously relevant to your own page - therefore high quality inbound links - is what will ultimately land your page in a top 10 listing for your keyword phrase.

On top of getting quality inbound links for your website to improve your search engine rankings, you will find that these links drive a lot of targeted traffic of their own as well.

These are the opportunities that you want to look for when analyzing the top 10 search results. Consider ways that you can strategically funnel traffic from their site to yours.

The sites that rank #1 on Google are reaching your target market. You may or may not be able to compete for those top spots. Even if you can, it may take some time to achieve that goal.

In the meantime you can benefit from their top rankings by being featured on their page. I call this "indirect rankings". You can often get lucky and even get links on your direct competitor's pages!

Analyze each page individually, and look for any outbound links. Who do they point to and why? See if they hyperlink to testimonials, resources, reviews, etc.

Consider what type of content you can submit that would most likely get published on that web page, or on any page of their site.

Tip: Never let them know you are desperate for links or traffic. Sell them on the obvious benefit of using your content or submission.

Niche Bloggers: "Be My Guest!"



Locate the most popular blogs in your niche, and study each one carefully. Subscribe to them and get a feel for the style and get to know the author. An active blog takes a sincere investment to create and promote, and also to maintain fresh content and a loyal readership.

While you ultimately want to "compete" with them for readers and buyers, you can easily capitalize on all of the hard work they have already invested by taking advantage of their one weakness: their need for fresh, relevant content.

Once you have a feel for their style and their overall theme, consider what you could contribute that would be a good match. Write a unique, high quality guest post and offer them exclusive reprint rights to the content. Be sure to request a response within 72 hours to secure those exclusive rights.

If they don't respond, or turn down your offer, you can pitch that same piece to another blogger in your niche. The worst case scenario is that you can use the content on your own site or blog, or submit it to article directories. But more often than not, you will find bloggers are more than willing to accept a well-written piece of content with exclusive reprint rights.

Keep in mind that you aren't just getting a quality inbound link from a frequently-spidered blog, but you are also getting targeted exposure to loyal readers. Be sure you include a compelling signature, and a live link back to a highly relevant page on your own domain.

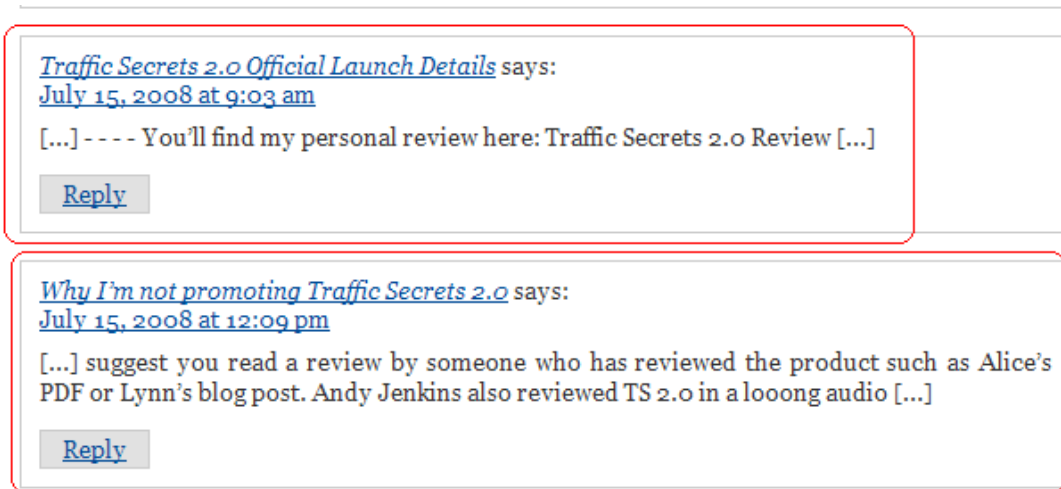
Tip: B-list bloggers are generally more receptive, and usually have a more personal relationship with their readers. If you have a hard time getting a response from top level bloggers, move down in the ranks to the B-listers.

The Trackback Attack

If you have your own blog, using trackbacks correctly is another great way to funnel targeted traffic out of more popular or established blogs in your niche.

Most blog platforms automatically publish a link in a preset trackback area or in the comments area when a link is created from another blog post. So if you link to my blog post from your blog post, a link to your blog post will show up on mine. You can test this by linking to one of your own blog posts, and noticing the trackback that displays on the blog post you linked to.

Here are two examples from my blog at www.ClickNewz.com. The first is a trackback from another post of mine. The second is from someone else's blog.



The image shows two examples of trackbacks. Each example is enclosed in a red-bordered box. The first trackback is from 'Traffic Secrets 2.0 Official Launch Details' dated July 15, 2008 at 9:03 am. The text says: '[...] - - - - You'll find my personal review here: Traffic Secrets 2.0 Review [...]' and has a 'Reply' button. The second trackback is from 'Why I'm not promoting Traffic Secrets 2.0' dated July 15, 2008 at 12:09 pm. The text says: '[...] suggest you read a review by someone who has reviewed the product such as Alice's PDF or Lynn's blog post. Andy Jenkins also reviewed TS 2.0 in a looong audio [...]' and has a 'Reply' button.

Some blogs choose not to display them, so you want to research the blogs in your niche and make note of those that obviously display trackbacks. You will see them just below the blog post, or mixed in with the comments.

Keep an eye on those blogs, specifically for hot topics or controversial content.

When you find a topic where you can contribute something meaningful, or that would be a great resource to share with your own readers, create a post on your own blog and link to their post as a reference.

This serves two purposes:

1. You get the trackback link pointing to your related post.
2. You are adding quality content to your own blog.

Most people will simply leave a comment, and link back to their blog/site from that comment. My testing has proven that Trackbacks get a **much higher** click-through rate than comments.

While trackbacks are often tagged with the nofollow link attribute, you'll find that blog readers frequently click through to relevant links or related resources - creating a nice stream of highly targeted visitors.

Tip: In addition to capitalizing on hot topics & niche trends, also look for established blog posts that rank well in the major search engines. Bloggers are usually not copywriters, and neglect to end their post with a strong call-to-action. If you word the title of your own post carefully, you can create that call-to-action in the form of a trackback that funnels their readers straight into your blog.

The Money is in... But Which List?

The money *is* in the list. Nobody ever said *which* list. Dig into your niche and find the publishers with the largest mailing lists, the highest response rates, and the best newsletters.

Subscribe to each of these lists yourself and research their methods, the type of content they publish, and make note of their publishing schedule.

Just like bloggers, most email publishers are struggling for quality content and fresh topic ideas. Popular publishers get bombarded with traditional article submissions, so you need a **unique** angle.

Get creative, and find ways to get inclusion!



Offer them a product review, a compelling interview, or a case study based on one of the products they recommend frequently.

The key is to read their newsletter or ezine and look for creative ways that you can offer something that fits with their current theme, or backs up their topic. Your goal is to create a piece of content that makes them look good to their readers.

Most newsletters are archived online now, or also offered through Aweber's RSS feature. This gives you direct exposure to their readers, as well as a high quality inbound link to your web site.

Tip: Are you trying to build your own mailing list? Getting exposure in an established email publication is the best way to attract new subscribers. People that subscribe to one ezine or newsletter usually subscribe to several within that same niche. Be sure to offer a compelling opt-in option in your signature, or on the landing page you link to in your signature.

Strategic Joint Ventures



In addition to your direct competitors, consider those people that are reaching your target market indirectly with other products and services. For example, if you sell web hosting you know that web designers are working directly with your target market.

What related products and services does your ideal visitor buy? Who are they buying from? Find out, and then offer their visitors and customers a special offer or an exclusive coupon code on a non-competing product.

To increase the click-through and conversion rate on your offer, make the link or code specific to the site or community you are targeting ("sitename" as coupon code, for example).

Don't rule out your direct competitors entirely. People usually buy from a variety of sources. Keep in mind the example that nobody owns only one book on any given topic. In fact, most people have an entire shelf of books on the same topic.

Tip: Don't send your potential joint venture partners a link to the sign-up page for your affiliate program. A true joint venture is an exclusive and mutually beneficial arrangement between two people.

Social Media Success

By now, your competitors are probably firmly established in popular social media properties. That's a good thing. They have already done the hard work for you.

Join their networks, get involved in their groups and respond to their content. Basically you want to "friend" them. This will give you exposure to their network, which will ultimately also become your network.

It will put you in a position to gain exposure with them personally as well. This can open the door for future opportunities such as joint ventures, guest blog posts, newsletter features, etc.

Tip: Don't spam on social media sites, or spend your time being self-promotional. Create a descriptive bio and then get involved in the current discussions. Put yourself in a position to become known, liked and trusted – by your peers and your target market alike.

See: [Twitter Marketing Strategy](#)

Aggressive Affiliates

Are there dozens, or even hundreds of aggressive affiliate marketers in your niche? Are they driving up the cost of pay-per-click advertising and crowding the first three pages of all relevant search engine results?



Great! Put them to work for you :-)

Instead of trying to compete with them for exposure and placement, let them compete with each other to promote your product. Depending on your niche and business model, you may have to get creative – but it will be *well* worth it.

Tip: Create a [low-cost report](#) or info-product that you can use as a lead generator to build a targeted email list. Offer your affiliates a very high commission rate, even 75-100%, and use that product to build your list.

You'll have all of those aggressive affiliates doing your marketing FOR YOU, and you can introduce your website or sell your products through that list.

Action Plan for Leveraging Your Competition

Look for opportunities in every niche that you explore. Keep an open mind, and consider how you can leverage what is already working in that space.

To make the best use of these strategies, you want to implement them in a very specific order:

- Research
- Social Media & Social Networking (friend/comment/respond)
- Link to their pages and blog posts, creating Google alerts and Trackbacks
- Offer quality, unique content
- Become their affiliate, and make sales
- Propose a valuable joint venture

If you approach your competitors in this order then they will recognize you or already know you by the time you submit content or a proposal, and your submission will be considered much more seriously.

A seasoned marketer can smell desperation and ignorance a mile away, so invest your time in getting on their radar and in knowing who they are and how they operate.

When you get ready to approach them, be personable – and mention their website, product or a specific article or post you enjoyed.

Example:

Hi John,

I've been reading your blog, and really enjoy your thoughts on XYZ product. I have been using it myself and have experienced interesting results. I'd be happy to write up a detailed case study on those results, and give you exclusive reprint rights so you can share it with your readers.

Let me know if that interests you – I can have it ready by tomorrow.

*Best,
Lynn Terry
ClickNewz.com*

Tip: Don't include affiliate links in content submissions. Do it for the link!

A Niche is Never as Competitive as it Appears

Your competitors got there.

So can you!

It's a matter of working more, working harder or working more consistently. The truth is that most people are not working consistently towards keeping their positions. All it takes is a simple investment of time and energy to out-do or out-rank most online marketers.

Very few of your competitors are active, aggressive marketers. Most of them are busy with other projects, or sitting back with their feet up and enjoying their top rankings & easy profits.

Once you make the cross-over to this new way of thinking, you'll automatically be in the top percent of marketers in your niche. You can rise above the competition with only reasonable and usually *minimal* effort – all by capitalizing on their needs and weaknesses.

So, instead of crossing off yet another niche due to the volume of competition, consider how you can leverage their hard earned success to your advantage – without ever really competing with them, or paying them a single dime in advertising.

Before you know it, you'll be smoking that so-called competition ;-)

Best,



Lynn Terry

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