

Preface:

Internet is developing rapidly and therefore, advertisements through internet are getting popular and the demand increases greatly. There are quite many kinds of methods to promote your homepages or even your products by internet. That's why I write this research, to introduce them to you, including their pros and cons.

Also, promoting is important for the development of all web sites. If you have made a very good sites, but without promotion, how can surfers get into your good sites and enjoy them?

Before having this research, I have done an on-line survey and the data shows that most of the voted people have clicked into the advertisements. The "fans" of advertisement contain 60.7% in 28 interviewed people totally, more than a half of the interviewed. However, in the question, "do you like advertisements", they performed so strange and there were 35.7% of people selecting "no idea", only 10.7% of people voted "yes" and 53.5% of people voted "no".

At last, I hope all web-owners can have a great development of their web sites.

About author:

Raymond Sao, owned a site for over seven years, familiar with HTML and PHP. URL of my personal homepage is <http://www.ho-bus.net> , including an extra download list, which starts working since last year and forum for discussion, which starts working since 2003.

This research is suitable for the ones who:

- Own a web site currently
- Will own a web site soon
- Want to increase the popularity of their sites
- Don't satisfy with the popularity of their sites
- Want to know more on this topic
- Want to try more promotion methods
- Want to have promotion effects, but without paying money
- Want to know how to make and design suitable advertisements
- Or any others who are interested in it

This research will tell you:

- The pros and cons of each promotion method clearly.
- How to choose according to the result of questionnaire.
- How to increase the promotion effect.
- How to measure if the success or failure is received after promotion work has been done.

At last, if you have questions or problems on promoting, you may feel free and send an e-mail to me. Please refer to soho_715@yahoo.com.hk.

Pros and cons of each method:

Before starting this topic, let me introduce some popular ones first and will discuss later:

- Putting banners on other pages.
- Putting texts on other pages.
- Convert your advertisements into a pop-up window and show it when loading a page.
- Developing friendship with others.
- Adding into search engines.
- Posting your advertisements on forums.
- By instant messages, such as using ICQ, AIM, Yahoo Messenger, etc.
- By e-mails.

> Putting banners on other pages:



The above screen shot, which is captured from my web site, shows a example of banner.

Definition:

Have a definition first. It is simple. After you have made a banner of your site, you request other webmasters to put it on their sites. Banners can be referred to animations, or just an image. Its size is not limited. It can be rectangle, or even square.

Advantages:

- A very good method of promotion, with powerful effect.
- Quite convenient to have one, just need to contact the webmasters.

Disadvantages:

- Lots of Expenditure on money is usually needed. Sometimes it needs many.
- People may get annoyed with this type, and thus they will not go into the link.
- The file size of a banner, especially for animation one, is usually very large. It may take a long time for surfers using 56K connection to download it and see the content. After the banner has really been downloaded, the surfer may have got into another page already.

How to design?

The banner design should be concentrated. It should be used some colourful design. So it may attract more people to click in your banner.

And, you should not write down your website's name merely, but also need to include other things such as the parts that are the most popular now, or describe the goodness of your pages.

Other remarks:

Because of the great expenditure, this method shouldn't be adopted quite often although it has a good effect. I recommend you to use another instead if you don't have so much money.

Also, animation is better. However, it should be regularly shown. Too much movies or too few are not good. You may put some user-friendly functions in it if the webmasters approve. For example, when the mouse cursor put on anywhere of the banner, the banner shows you another colour or other effects. But I repeat once more, it shouldn't be too many. Otherwise, an opposite effect will be generated.

At last, there is a recommendation. You should beware of the file size. The maximum size should not be more than 50kb. Otherwise, no matter broadband users or 56K modem may skip it.

> **Putting texts on other pages:**

Definition:

This type is very similar to the above one, putting banners on other pages. But the banner is replaced by some texts. The length of text is usually limited by the webmasters.

Advantages:

- A quite good method of promotion, with good effect. But of course, it mustn't be better than putting a banner. Let's look into it later.
- Quite convenient to have one, just need to contact the webmasters.
- Low loading time. Usually 1 second is not needed. It will have been loaded after the loading of the page.

Disadvantages:

- Comparing with the above, it is obvious that the effects are smaller.
- The advertisements cover only a little space of a page. So fewer hits will be received.
- Can't describe many things with long words because of the limited rule.
- People get bored and tired because of the boring design.

How to design?

If you are allowed and permitted, then you should edit the font colour into some colourful ones. It can attract more people to view it. But please remember, don't edit it into some irregular ones such as white or light yellow (except that the background is some deep colours).

How about the text content? Because of the usual limited length, you should choose the most important. But the homepage's name must be appeared in it. Otherwise, how can people know which type of web pages they are?

Other remarks:

This method is cheaper than the above. You may try this first, then try the above method. But please note, if after having this advertisements on other sites for a long time, but the popularity of your sites remain the same or similar. Then you should stop using this type immediately and prevent from wasting money.

> **Convert your advertisements into a pop-up window:**

Definition:

When a page is being loaded, a small window comes out and there are your advertisements inside it. It may be images, animation or texts. Just in your mind. Usually there is a link linking up them to your web sites.

Advantages:

- Effective effect
- Can promote your sites in a specific window, reduce direct competition with others
- Can attract the surfers since the new window is being focused usually

Disadvantages:

- High promoting cost is needed
- Surfers may get annoyed with this and therefore have a bad image of your sites
- Anti-popup's programs are common and popular, such as Yahoo Toolbar and the new function based in Internet Explorer with Window XP Service Pack 2. You may also download from Microsoft's site.
- The older computers may hang quite often if meeting this type. So, they may not able to see the advertisements.

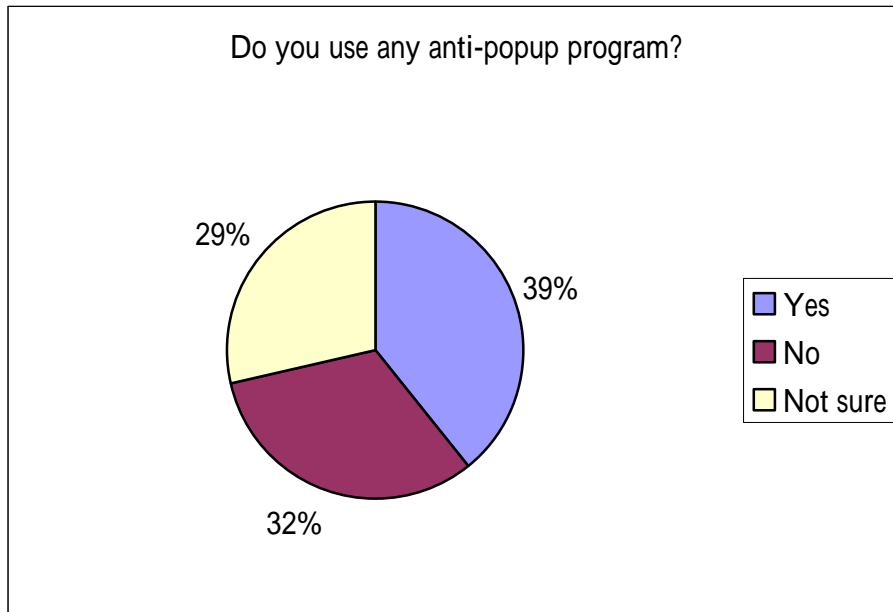
How to design?

Don't think that it is good that if the advertisement's size is large. Please don't think so. It will only make people become more annoyed. Normally, in my view, the length and width shouldn't larger than 500 pixels. So it will be suitable for the monitors that only have a low resolution, such as 640*480.

Besides, animation is better. It can attract others to see it. But remember, don't place too much animation.

The result of the surveys:

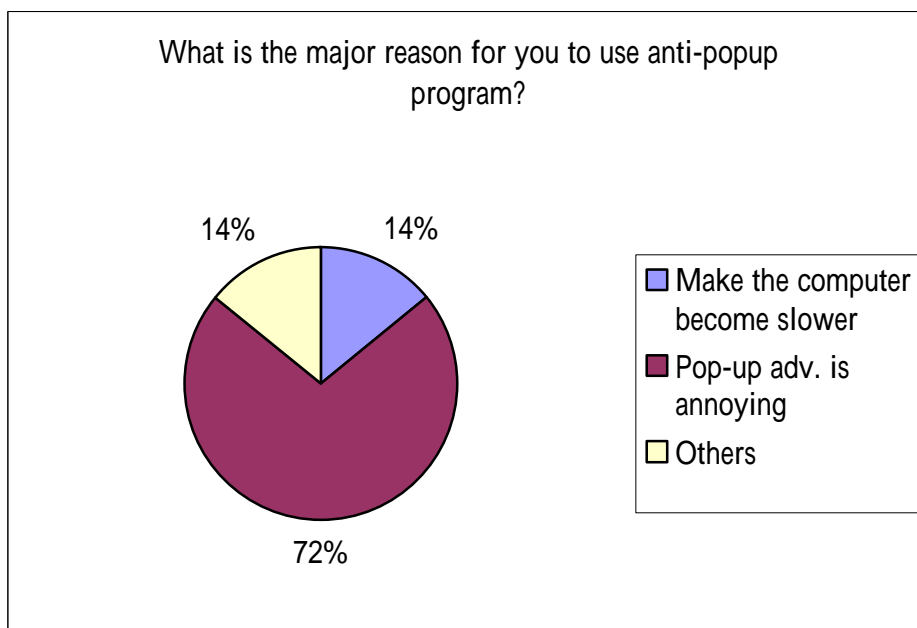
I have done an on-line survey. And the results are shown as graphs in order to see easily.
For the question “**do you use any anti-popup program?**”:



From the above *, it can show clearly that the people using anti-popup are common. It contained 39% totally.

Also, varieties are present because many people voted "not sure".

For the question “**What is the major reason for you to use anti-popup program?**”



From the above *, it can show that 72% of interviewed people thought that pop-up windows are annoying.

* There are totally 28 interviewers.

Other remarks:

Actually, this type of promotion is getting rarer and it is not famous currently, not like before. The main reason is that people gets bored and annoyed as the two graphs above told you.

Another point that you need to note, that is the file size. Lower than 150kb is better and thus no matter modem connection, or broadband users can download it in a short time.

At last, I strongly don't recommend you to adopt this type. It may generate a bad image. Just have a balance yourselves and consider. Good luck!

> **Developing friendship with others:**

Definition:

If you are friends with some webmasters, you may ask them for interchanging logos each other. It means, you put your friend's logo inside your pages while your friends will do so, too. It is usually a small logo merely. The right captured picture shows us a good example.

Advantages:

- It is always free, so low promotion cost is needed

Disadvantages:

- Lower effect is received
- All logos are placed in one place, so competition is occurred
- You can't decide the position where placing your logos yourselves
- Only a small logo, maybe 88*31 pixels is allowed. Surfers may hardly see it



How to design?

Because of the fact that it is small in pixels, so you should adopt the followings. The logo should be tidy. So it lets surfers have a dirty feeling about it. Also, writing the name or title of your homepages is certainly needed. Having the URL is recommended, but it is better to do so only if you have any specific domains yourselves such as yahoo.com, google.com, but not the sub-domains such as hk.geocities.com/abc.

The colour should be used some attractive ones. It can even be black in background. It is up to you to choose.

Other remarks:

How about choosing the target promotion sites? Let's make it easy. The sites that the topic is similar to yours, such as health, life or car. Don't place it into other sites or the effect will be lower.

In addition, if you have used this type, you should check whether your promotion sites do

place your logo in their pages. If not, you should ask for the webmasters for adding them back. If unluckily the webmasters ignore you or reject, you may remove their logo in your sites, too. Therefore, they can't enjoy a "free lunch", promoting without paying effort.

> Adding into search engines:



The above captured image shows two types of methods, do you know what they are?

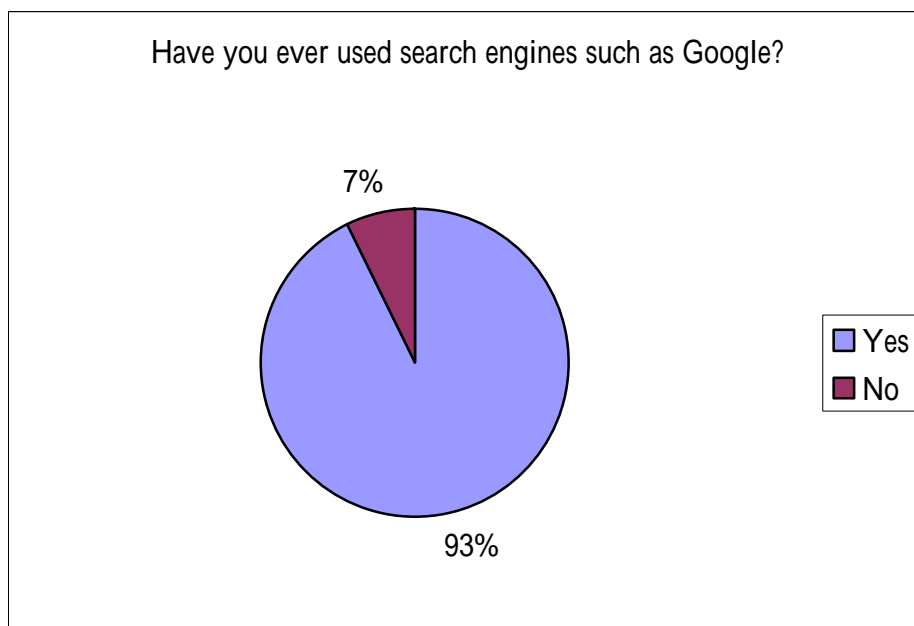
Definition:

For a computer user, you must know what search engine is. People type in some searching words, then some relative web sites come. It is useful for every users, no matter for business or education. It has been a vital part of our on-line life. Seeing from this, it seems that search engine has a high promotion cost and great invisible advantages behind it, doesn't it? I may answer you, yes. But, some skills are needed. I will tell you one by one in the following passage.

Before starting, let's see some surveys together first.

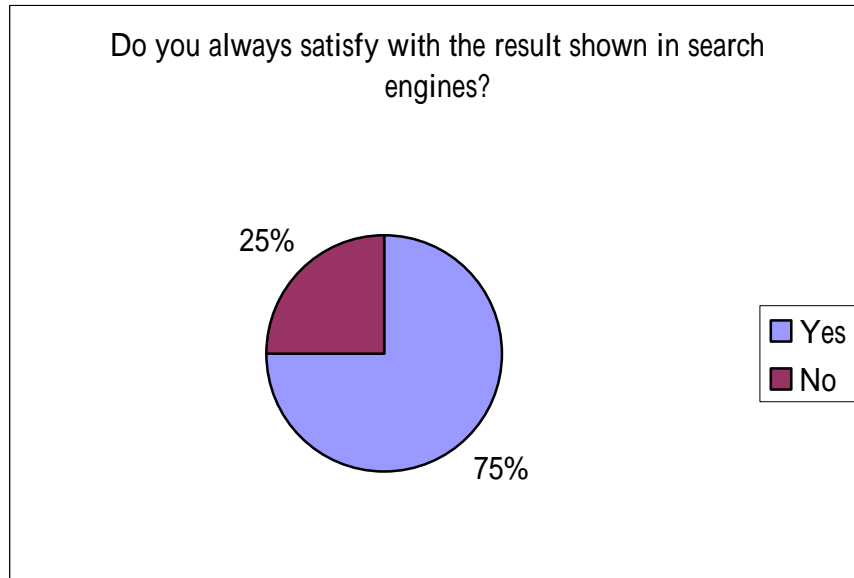
The result of the surveys:

For the question "**have you ever used search engines such as Google?**":



From the above *, it can show that 93% of interviewed people have ever used search engines.

For another question “**do you always satisfy with the result shown in search engines?**”:



From the above *, it can show that 75% of interviewed people always satisfy with the result in search engines.

Therefore there is a “must” to add your sites into their database.

* There are totally 28 interviewers.

Advantages:

- It is always free for famous sites, such as Yahoo, Google
- Although being free, a large promoting effect comes
- Less effort is necessary for making a advertisement
- Apart from having promotion, user of it can have advantages for them such as finding resources quickly.

Disadvantages:

- For some famous sites, long time is needed to queue until they added the details of yours into their database. So, be patient then.
- Long time is needed to change data. So, be patient again.
- The effect is mainly depended on how front your web sites arrange. And they usually arrange it randomly unless you pay them money.

How to design?

Let’s talk about how the description be decided. You should opt for the most important keywords of your sites. Or, you may just write all the features of your sites. It is both suitable. But for the first one mentioned is much better.

However, there are some search engines which will automatically add web sites. Yahoo and Google are the best examples. They will add yours automatically after some time when your pages are built. But, you may find a problem related to this. Let’s have a quick example. If my page’s title is “Car”. Then, the content is “Cars are good”. But, when the search engines automatically add your

page, they will choose the content as the description. So it will be “Cars are good”. But, of course it is not a good description. So, I am going to talk about how to let them use the words you want.

First, open the HTML of the pages first. You may open it simply by notepad. Then add the below scripts to <head>... </head> tag.

```
Meta name="description" content="Description here"> ----- 1
Meta name="keywords" content="Keywords here"> ----- 2
```

Let me talk about their uses first. For the first line, it is used to recognize the description, as the above paragraph told. You only need to edit the texts “Description here” to what you want.

For the second line, it is for recognizing keywords. If your pages are about car, you may type in car, or anything you like instead of “Keywords here”.

But please beware of one point. NOT all the search engines adopt this kind of scripts. It may not be supported. But, never mind, just have a try.

In order to prevent readers from not realizing how to add the scripts, I will have an example.

The version without the scripts:

```
<html>
<head>
  <title>Car</title>
</head>
<body>
  Cars are good.
</body>
</html>
```

Another version with the scripts:

```
<html>
<head>
  <title>Car</title>
  Meta name="description" content="It is a sites about cars."> ----- 1
  Meta name="keywords" content="car">
</head>
<body>
  Cars are good.
</body>
</html>
```

After you have read this example, hope you will get it.

More about Yahoo:

As everyone knows, Yahoo is a giant on searching machine. Its service covers almost all countries in the world. There are some secrets about adding your sites in it faster. Let's discover it. Get ready?

First, Yahoo! will add for the Yahoo emails' owner faster. That means, if in the E-mail blank, you write down something like xxx@yahoo.com, they will do it for you faster. Is it an interesting secret?

Second, Yahoo will add for the ones with short domain name, such as abc.com. If your sites haven't, I am sorry to tell you that you may need to wait or submit for more times.

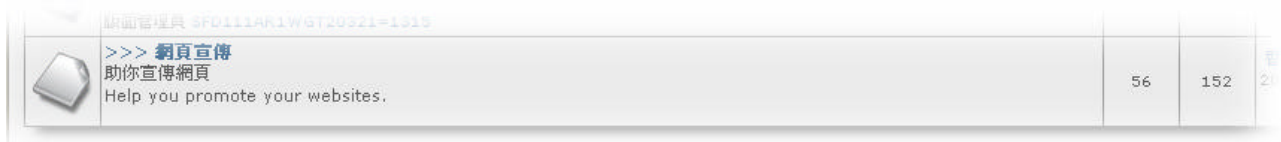
At last, DO NOT submit for so many times in short term. Normal, if they haven't added yours after two weeks, you may re-submit again. In this case, be patient. I can't help you anymore.

Of course, if you want to be in process faster, you may pay them some money. Since this few years, Yahoo provides us a "sponsored searching". If you paid them, they would have to place your home page at the top after a specific keyword has been typed in. But, the cost is very high indeed.

Other remarks:

After a long passage, I hope you will get familiar with this type. Apart from some popular ones such as Yahoo and Google, don't forget others, such as Alexa and Yam. They are also okay. Let's add them in as many search engines as you can.

> **Posting your advertisements on forums:**



The above captured screen shot shows an simple example.

Definition:

I must tell about what "forum" is first. Discussion center can replace it. Still not understand? Its working principle is that someone posts a topic, then another can reply it. It can be similar to a chat room. It is mainly made up with some database programs such as MySQL or ODBC.

This type is to post a topic, and the content is about your advertisements. So people can see that topic and get into your web sites.

Advantages:

- Free
- You may decide what the content is yourself, so more freedom is received
- No matter images, texts are available usually

Disadvantages:

- Relatively low effect
- Limited by the popularity of that forums
- May have some limited rules in some particular forums
- Can't place the advertisements for a long time since others will post theirs

How to design?

I will discuss only the text part since I have told about making images in the previous parts. It is quite simple at all. In the topic of the post, you'd better mention your website's name. You may also add the updated items or what's new. In the content, you may briefly describe what's new and more about your sites. But please don't write so much, or we will get bored. Usually 5 to 7 lines are enough.

Other remarks:

As forums are getting more popular, this type will be more common and the users will be increasingly more. You should try more this method and you will definitely find success.

> By instant messages:



The above captured screen shot shows an example of instant messenger, ICQ.

Definition:

Nowadays, ICQ or any others are getting famous. You may send your advertisements to your friends directly. That's it. Finished already!

Advantages:

- Easy to make an advertisement
- Simple to send
- Good for small business to spread their news
- Free

Disadvantages:

- Quite low effect
- Images can't be sent, only text is available
- Users may get tired and ignore it

How to design it?

For this case, content is the most important point. You should write something simply, just in few lines. It can attract readers well and they will enter your sites then. Don't write a long passage and fewer than four lines is suitable. For others, you may refer to the previous parts.

Other remarks:

Don't try to send yours to any strangers because they will probably not open it or even close at once. You should opt for some good friends and send them. They will feel friendly and open it, then have a look.

> **By E-mails:**



Gmail, a new brand of free e-mail provider, is owned by Google.

Definition:

Like instant messages, you include all your advertisements and then send to your friends, or classmates, etc.

Advantages:

- Easy to make an advertisement
- Simple to send
- Good for small business to spread their news
- Free
- Can include both image files or texts

Disadvantages:

- Quite low effect
- Users may get tired and ignore it and consider it as a spam

How to design it?

Due to the popularity of spam in the internet, you should do something specially to prevent people from considering it as a spam. The best way is to write it in your mother language, traditional Chinese (Big5). People may try to open it because of its friendly language. But remember, just open, then whether they click into your web sites are depend on how the content is. You may refer to the previous parts and I am not going to talk again.

Other remarks:

The most important is to generate a user-friendly feeling among readers. Otherwise, a spam-like mail will be produced. Also, you should merely send to your friends but not strangers. At last, you should not send them quite often and repeat sending the same content.

Summary:

Many methods have been told and discussed and it is nearly finished. The next job for you is to choose which you want to have. Having a banner, or by sending e-mails? I can't help you do this. But if you have any problems, you may send an e-mail to me.

If you find another useful method of promotion, please share with me. At last, hope your sites will be always popular.

References:

- Low-cost web site promotion (by Barry Feig) P.62, P.220.

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- Thank you for my3q.com for providing me free questionnaire program for the survey

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