



# THE INSIDER

By Don Allen - Publisher

## HOW'S YOUR WEB MARKETING?

**W**ith a new year starting, I'd like to address your marketing for 2007. We could talk about new technologies, but no marketing technique is really new. For sure, someone in some other industry has already used it. So, keep your eyes open wherever you are shopping for techniques you can "borrow" for your own business. The best spies make the best marketers. Watch what your competitors are doing and learn from their mistakes (and their successes).

The same basic marketing principles that were relied upon 20 years ago still work today. For example, customers are, quite rightly, more interested in themselves than in your business. People still want the same basic benefits. Give them what they want, and you will succeed.

**Does your company have a web site? If so, who designed it?** Is it just a one-page splash page and contact site, or do you really market yourself?

A good web site should make a good first impression to visitors. If you are using a "canned" theme like one made from Microsoft Frontpage, you are doing yourself a disservice. Most Frontpage sites reek of "cheap and shoddy." Actually, a badly designed web site is worse than no web site at all! Take a good long hard look at your web site for 2007. First let's cover two basics:

**Spend whatever extra money it takes to get your own domain name.** Don't rely on a free server. Getting your own domain name establishes credibility in the minds of your prospects. It is worth the extra \$10 per year for your own name and the extra \$10 or so per month for hosting.

**Offer minimum links on your main page.** One of the primary goals of any business is to make sure you don't confuse your customers. By offering minimum links on your main page, you will limit the chances that your visitor will stray off elsewhere and not get back to your main theme. Minimize the links and keep your visitors as focused as possible.

**What is unique about your product or your service?** Is it better than the competition or is it the exact same thing with a different wrapper? If you look around, you'll find that the successful sites online are never "me-too" sites. They're sites that have come up with a unique angle in a targeted niche market.

**Even free advertising costs you something.** Every bit of advertising you do costs you something, either money or time. Make sure that it is producing for you. Nothing you do is literally free. It will cost your business significantly less in the long run to buy a \$500.00 program if it helps you to accomplish your goals in 1/10 the time... Unless, of course, you don't think your time is worth anything, in which case I've got just the opening for you - (no salary, of course!).

Next month - is AOL dragging down your company image?

Publisher

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## JUST FOR FUN!

Hidden somewhere in this issue is a small "Saw Blade" that looks like this.

All readers who fax our office with the correct location will be entered into a drawing to



Win a \$25 Gift Certificate.

FAX: 352-351-4730

It could be hidden anywhere (but not on this page!) ... in a feature article, in an advertisement, upside down at the end of a sentence...**ANYWHERE!** So search every page, enjoy this issue and find the hidden item.

The winner will be announced in the April 2007 issue of Concrete Today.

## WE HAVE A WINNER!!!

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Well, our winner for the December issue is **Peggy Caudill of Valley Concrete Operations, Inc. in Belevue, KS.** The "Clock" was hidden on page 20, in the lower corner of the photo... **Great Work Peggy!**

## HONORABLE MENTION

The following sharp-eyed readers also found the hidden item, but sorry! Only one winner per issue. Better luck next time!

Mike Cadigan - Americast Halltown Plant  
Halltown, WV

Jane Burdick - Aggregate Industries  
North Grafton, MA

Jerome Wipf - Spring Prairie Precast  
Hawley, MN

Josh Higgins - Copeland Enterprises, Inc.  
Denver, CO

Ralph DiFucci - North Girard Concrete Works  
Lake City, PA

Donna Simms - Atnip Design & Supply Center  
Huntsville, AL

Amanda Stevens - White River Materials, Inc.  
Batesville, AR 72503

Phil McComiskey - Gloucester Transit Mix Co.  
Gloucester, MA

Pino Meloni - Hedford Building Supply Co.  
Redford, MI