

Internet Ranking Expert Clicking With First Teleclass

BY JOHN VOKET, Reporter The Newtown Bee
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For musicians, it is playing a concert at Carnegie Hall, and for horse racing fans, it is winning the Triple Crown. But for a consultant who works to help get clients to the top of Internet search engines, Newtown consultant Joanne Marcinek has hit her industry's equivalent of the Lotto.

"I recently got one of my clients ranked number one on Google," she said humbly, sitting between two computer workstations at her Sandy Hook office.

Coming off the numerous successes getting her clients pumped up to the top ranked positions on Yahoo, Ask Jeeves, Google, AOL, and other popular Internet search engines, Ms Marcinek recently hosted a well-attended free seminar at the Booth Library. And next

week, she is opening her office to a worldwide audience, hosting her first teleclass incorporating an hour's worth of material from her recent live workshop.



The free activity, entitled Fundamentals of Internet Marketing, will be in session September 19, from 9:30 to 10:30 am. Topics she plans to cover include how to have a well-designed website, the basics of Internet marketing and advertising, and how and why to use website statistics for analysis and refinement of Internet marketing efforts.

The class is offered via conference call technology with a corresponding presentation, viewable online. The teleclass is the next logical step for the Newtowner, whose self-described mission is to help people "get the relevant information they need on the Internet by translating techno-babble into straightforward, easy-to-understand language." And she does it with a cheery combination of tech-savvy attitude and good old-fashioned intuition. With a career background in finance, the last "day job" Ms Marcinek held was implementing accounting and manufacturing management systems for a company in Milford.

While these career elements may seem a distance from website analytics, she brings the organizational skills of a financial manager to bear each time she delves into a new client project. Besides, when it comes to making money on the Internet, it is mostly about attracting people to one's website.

Most of the added skills she needed to launch AskJoanne.com Ms Marcinek culled from online classes and pouring through hundreds of other people's websites, including those all-important search engines. What she has learned, and will convey in numerous ways during her teleclass next week, is that all the bells and whistles on an ambitiously designed website will do little good for the client if folks searching for the particular product or service offered cannot find the site among hundreds or thousands of competitors across the planet.

"Before any user sees a site, the search engines and browsers have to read it, find it, and it has to be elevated to a significant position on those search engines," she said. "And unless you know and understand a few things about how these systems work, you won't get that top ranking position unless you are buying it."

Ms Marcinek said an uneducated client can subscribe to a pay-per-click service that can easily elevate one's website to a relatively high position on a number of the most popular search engines, but it could cost them.

"Those clicks add up fast," she said. "And depending on the key words you are using, a lot of those clicking on may not even be interested in what you are actually offering." Conversely, for about \$600, Ms Marcinek will perform a comprehensive website review and link research, producing a report that can be the roadmap any site owner can use to navigate to the top positions on many leading search engines. She can also be retained to manage accounts for an additional fee.

It all could come down to something as elementary as the key search terms. And pay-per-click services will also be happy to obtain key search terms for a client for anywhere from a few cents to a few dollars per-click, per-word.

For the client who finally has built that elusive better mousetrap, say, the term "mousetrap," would cost significantly more than the term, "perfect mousetrap," Ms Marcinek explained.

"The second term would likely be searched by more people looking for exactly what it is, a perfect mousetrap, so its value is substantially less. But the term 'mousetrap' is much more generic, so it would not only be more expensive to bid on that search term, but it would cost you a lot more on a per-click basis because you could get visited by every sixth grader researching science papers on mice," she explained.

"That's why a lot of advertisers I find are paying way more than they need to and are not achieving the goal of attracting the targeted traffic they need," she added.

The other important aspect of any website, no matter how big, is consistency in naming pages with the content on that page, versus the company name or the search killer: "Untitled page."

"When you run the term 'untitled page' through Google, you get something like 88 million hits," Ms Marcinek said. "Since search engines rank web pages, not sites, and anyone can enter a website through any single page, you always want the most important words about each page, the product or service in each page title."

Since she began consulting in 1999, more than 125 clients have asked Joanne for assistance, primarily for optimization and design work. But through the outreach she hopes to continue through her occasional in-person seminars and teleclasses, she hopes to help a lot more clients get top search engine rankings.

"I've still got a lot of learning to do myself," she said. "But the number one lesson I've learned, and try to make clients understand is, nobody, *nobody*, can ever guarantee you a number one search engine ranking unless it's a paid placement."

Anyone interested in participating in Ms Marcinek's September 19 teleclass should call 364-0222 or email info@askjoanne.com for the conference call number and dial-in PIN.