

Networking is About Building Relationships



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Hello 516Ads.com networkers and readers!! As I told you in my previous article networking is a passion of mine. In the last 2 years I have started 3 local networking groups, and I love it. There are different ways of networking. There are many options to attend local meetings or you can choose to network online. Both require etiquette and skills.

I have been networking online for about 3 years now. I must admit that when I first started, I really spent too much time answering posts on boards, posting comments on guestbooks and trying to help people connect. I had to limit my time. Since I am very organized, I have made a schedule for myself and I keep myself to it. I visit the networking pages only on the days and hours that are reserved for online networking.

There are many networking sites out there. It is hard to make a choice, but once you check them out, you will see which one fits your needs. It happens to me often that I cancel out a site after a few months just because it is not the site I feel comfortable with.

Message boards and networking sites are different. A site that is strictly a message board is different from a networking site, because it does not offer you a home page on which you can fill out your own profile. It is only used for exchanging

messages. You will however have the chance to introduce yourself in the 'Introductions' section. I prefer networking sites. On these sites you will have a profile page. This page can usually be tweaked so it reflects you in colors, font, etc. The advantage is that you have a permanent 'advertisement' for yourself and your business.

On networking sites I often get a message from people who are interested in networking.

Is online Networking any different than face-to-face networking?

One difference in the face-to-face kind is that you immediately know if you 'click' with someone. As opposed to online networking, where (most of the time) you do not get the 'feel' of the person you are talking to right away. Online networking takes more time to build a trust.

Local networking meetings and online networking sites are not just about doing business. No one likes to have a sales pitch in the first few minutes of meeting you. They're about making connections and building relationships.

The first step in making a networking connection is to simply introduce yourself. Online that means post an introduction to the group and then start sending comments to the boards or threads. Let them get comfortable with you. Then start talking to the ones you feel you have a connection with or you could network with by email or PM.

A good way to find out if you have anything in common is to visit their

homepage and read their **entire** page. Follow their links, read their guest book entries and look at the list of networks they are affiliated with. This way you can find out if they might be the person you would enjoy having as a friend or business connection.

Then send them an email or private message. **Connect with them. Make a new friend.** That way, when you do ask them to network with you, they will be more likely to respond 'yes'.

Online or face-to-face networking, there is a right way and a wrong way. Take your smile with you when you go and be open to sharing your thoughts and ideas. **Networking is relationship building and making friends.**