

Steve:

1. Search engine location
2. Search engine location
3. Search engine location!

We are everywhere, that's my job! Meta tags, comments inside HTML, ongoing promotion via constant submission. We want to be in the top 10 of every search engine — and we are most of the time.

Now I'm not taking away from the other methods — press releases, other sites, links, interviews, and so forth. But they all pale into insignificance when we do the numbers on our search engine referral logs.

Audri: What about banner advertising?

Steve: I don't use any outside banner advertising but I'm going to add exclusively Ostriches On Line banner ads to every page. They will promote other products we have for sale and encourage people to buy our stuff now.

We are very selfish about our site. We have an external links page, but it is buried. You can find it, but not easily. Once you are

on our site there are two ways out:

1. Keep clicking back
2. Type another URL

This is not the norm. I realize that. But I made a decision early on that once we had

prospects on our site, we needed to keep them. Leaving would be their choice and we wouldn't make it easy for them.

People ask me to link a page to their site, which we do very reluctantly. I am here to promote Ostriches On Line, not www.someone-else.com.

Audri: Now let's talk about your e-zine, *Ostriches On Line*. I really like the way you invite people to join your mailing list. Can you describe your e-zine briefly?

Steve: Our newsletter goes out to over 10,500 people worldwide in 113 countries at the last count. I have a very diversified audience and it is a balancing act between content for the farmers and ostrich growers and those who are watching the industry grow and those who are waiting for an opportunity to join us.

I started the newsletter because sales is about familiarity and trust. I visited all the ostrich sites I could before I started Ostriches On Line and I visit them all again now. I leave an email address, sign guestbooks anonymously and guess what? Nothing happens! No feedback, no response — nothing to bring me back or buy anything — so I wanted to be different and change the mold.

Audri: This is obviously key to your success. OK, how do you promote your e-zine?

Steve: Because of the specialized nature, the search engines are number one. Who else wants dozens of Steve's email about #*(^%#@# ostriches every month? <g>

People who register on the site for the password-protected areas are automatically signed up for the newsletter.

Audri: That's a great idea!

Steve: Other successful methods I use are my sig file, discussion groups, Internet announcement services, business cards, letterheads — it is even on the checks I write. I'd probably tattoo it on the cat if he ever went bald.

Audri: <g> How about "other" promotions off the Net?

Steve: So far not much. This year I have been requested by a few people to spend money on promotion but we declined them all.

Audri: How much does your Web site cost

