

Insider Tips and Strategies for Using StumbleUpon as a Powerful Traffic Source



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What is StumbleUpon?

StumbleUpon (<http://www.stumbleupon.com>) is a discovery-oriented website, where members submit and rate the site's content, determining which content is served up most frequently to other users with similar interests.

After signing up for a free account and installing a toolbar extension, a StumbleUpon user chooses topics she's interested in and begins "stumbling" to discover Web content that's highly recommended by other users who share similar interests.

StumbleUpon then shows the user the top-ranked relevant content recommended by like-minded members. The user can vote either "thumbs up" (I like this) or "thumbs down" (no more like this) – and continue stumbling to discover more relevant content to experience and vote on.

Over time, the user's votes help StumbleUpon show her Web content that's increasingly targeted to her unique interests – which is why most members agree that StumbleUpon is extremely addictive. Members often spend hours at a time stumbling and discovering fascinating websites.

StumbleUpon says its goal is simple:

"We help people discover interesting or informative Web content that they wouldn't have thought to search for.

Many people also find StumbleUpon to be a very useful tool for research and Internet searches, as well as for social bookmarking and social networking.

Why Should You Consider Using StumbleUpon?

1. **For traffic.** StumbleUpon can send potentially tens of thousands of targeted visitors to your website or blog.

And unlike some of the other Web 2.0 sites (such as Digg, which tends to send an avalanche of visitors within a short timeframe), StumbleUpon's "discovery" approach tends to spread out the traffic it sends you over a longer period of time – usually over several days or weeks, and often permanently.

Also, because StumbleUpon's users find your website by voting for the type of content they want to see, they're much more likely to be closely targeted visitors – who'll subscribe to your newsletter or RSS feed, and return to your site.

2. **For high-quality incoming links** to your website / blog. StumbleUpon visitors who are interested in your content often link to or blog about your site, or trackback to your blog posts.
3. **For doing your own online research.** As we'll discuss in a moment, StumbleUpon can be a fantastic tool for discovering relevant content that you'd never find with a Google search.
4. **For connecting with other people who share your interests.** Looking for a potential JV partner? An interesting person to interview? A source for particular goods or services? StumbleUpon is a good resource for networking with other people in your niche.
5. **For bookmarking** all the great content you discover as you stumble.

TIP: Many StumbleUpon members also use other social bookmarking and social networking websites.

That makes it very likely that your high-quality content on StumbleUpon will wind up being submitted by other members to more Web 2.0 sites.

How Does StumbleUpon Work?

To help you discover interesting new Web content, StumbleUpon uses a combination of other members' opinions plus "smart" technology that learns what each user likes and dislikes.

As it learns more about your interests, StumbleUpon shows you an increasingly customized selection of content that other like-minded members have recommended and voted for. In fact, the more you "stumble" and vote on the content it shows you, the less you'll need to vote "thumbs down" - because StumbleUpon also quickly learns what you **don't** want to see.

Your votes also help StumbleUpon connect you with other people who share your unique combination of interests, if you choose to use the site's social features.

Content that receives a high proportion of "thumbs up" votes is shown more often. Meanwhile, content that receives more "thumbs down" votes receives fewer views and is eventually dropped out of StumbleUpon's database.

Other tools StumbleUpon uses to personalize your stumbling include:

- a list of about 500 topics from which you can select your interests
- inherent filtering out of spam and junky websites, thanks to the voting process
- your stumbling history, so it won't show you the same sites again.

When targeted StumbleUpon visitors stumble across your website, a significant percentage of them are likely to be interested in your content, and may travel around through several pages of your site. Often they'll submit and vote for more of your specific pages, giving you an additional traffic boost.

StumbleUpon's Toolbar

Your easy means of using StumbleUpon is a toolbar extension that's available for either FireFox or Internet Explorer web browsers.

Although you'll have to sign up for a free account at StumbleUpon in order to use it, you can install the toolbar for either web browser from here: <http://www.stumbleupon.com/download.php> .

StumbleUpon doesn't use the toolbar to collect personal data, but to serve up increasingly customized content that you haven't already seen, by keeping track of your stumbles, votes, etc.

For more information, you may want to see StumbleUpon's privacy policy, including how it relates to the toolbar: <http://www.stumbleupon.com/privacy.html> .

Another common question potential Stumblers ask is whether this toolbar contains any spyware, adware, etc. Fortunately, the answer is no – it does NOT contain any malware.

It is possible to use StumbleUpon without the toolbar, but only on a limited scale. You'll be able to use the Forums, send and read PM's (private messages), etc. - but without the toolbar you won't be able to stumble (discover new content) or vote on anything.

How StumbleUpon is Different from Other Social Media Websites

StumbleUpon is unique among social media sites in many ways. If you understand its differences, you'll be able to use them to your best advantage in getting a nice flow of targeted Stumble traffic.

Here are some of the ways StumbleUpon is unique:

- **Users see content targeted specifically to them.** Instead of showing all users the overall top-ranked content from the entire site, StumbleUpon is set up to show each user a selection of content that's customized to his particular interests.

This "personalized content" model reduces the fierce competition, spamming, and aggressive commenting that exist on many other Web 2.0 sites.

It also makes StumbleUpon interesting and useful to a more diverse array of people.

- **Emphasis on surfing and discovery.** Also different is StumbleUpon's emphasis on being a "discovery engine" instead of a news source.

While the content of many Web 2.0 sites focuses on breaking news stories, StumbleUpon's content tends to be evergreen.

It's skewed heavily toward feature stories, reference sites, the arts, entertainment, hobbies, how-to's, photos, etc. - in other words, content that remains relevant to members' ongoing interests.

That's one of the reasons why StumbleUpon tends to deliver sustained traffic over a longer timeframe, instead of in one rapid, server-crashing blitz.

- **Users interact more with landing page sites.** Another difference is that StumbleUpon users often stay and explore several pages of the websites they stumble across.

Since they're already targeted to the sites they stumble on (thanks to StumbleUpon's content-customizing process), they tend to be more interested in browsing further into those sites, following links they find within the sites, etc.

StumbleUpon users also tend to be more likely to bookmark and return to sites they find by stumbling, as well as to subscribe to newsletters and RSS feeds.

In contrast, a major portion of other Web 2.0-directed traffic tends to “bounce” onto the landing page, skim it quickly, and bounce back out – without exploring, clicking, or subscribing. Even when they're somewhat interested in the landing page's content, they aren't necessarily interested in the rest of the site.

- **Users focus on one site at a time.** On other social media sites, users see links to all of the content at once – and have to scroll and choose what to view.

StumbleUpon delivers one content item at a time, allowing the user to focus on it without being distracted by competing content, and decide how to vote on it before continuing.

StumbleUpon vs. Traditional Search Engines

Although traditional search engines and StumbleUpon are both intended as tools for finding information on the Internet, they work quite differently – and usually retrieve very different content results for you.

Each can be very effective in delivering useful results, but you may want to start using StumbleUpon as a Web search tool in many cases, instead of automatically using Google.

Here's why:

- **Search engines** function like well-organized filing cabinets, with all information stored by keyphrase and ranked by an objective algorithm.

While many of Google's results may prove to be on track for your needs, they will probably also include some junky websites and some keyword-confused results. (For example, when you're Googling for data on the REM stage of sleep, your results may also include several entries about the band named REM.)

To find relevant content using a traditional search engine, you might have to go through several pages of search engine results, or do a few different searches for various keyphrases.

- **StumbleUpon** functions more like a channel-surfing system, with content subjectively ranked by humans.

Instead of being based on an algorithm that considers all possible content from the entire Web, StumbleUpon's search results come from a pre-filtered collection of content favored by other people who share your interests and opinions. That means you'll tend to wind up with high-quality sites that you really like.

Many users say they find more relevant search results by Stumbling than by Googling – without any annoying, spammy pages or off-topic entries cluttering the results.

Of course, you might do better to use Google instead of StumbleUpon if you're searching for specific information that's outside of your usual interests – such as “how to stop a nosebleed”.

But if you're searching for interesting resources, cool information, ideas for content, people to interview, etc. - then StumbleUpon is likely to lead you to more relevant, high-quality results.

TIP: When you do a Search on StumbleUpon, your results are customized to your interests. Different members will see different search results for the same keywords.

StumbleUpon's Anti-Spam Measures

Unlike some of the other Web 2.0 sites, it's fairly difficult for webmasters to spam StumbleUpon or game the way its system works.

According to StumbleUpon:

“StumbleUpon recommends pages based on correlation and user clustering, rather than average ratings, so people rating their own sites as 'I like it!' cannot spam the database. Anyone attempting to circumvent or abuse this system is in violation of our terms of service, and is subject to prosecution.”

As another anti-spam measure, StumbleUpon encourages users to report spammy sites they stumble across, by using the toolbar's dropdown menu and selecting “Report Last Stumble”, then “As Spam”.

Voting “thumbs down” on junk content as you stumble will also help low-quality content be eventually removed from StumbleUpon's database.

TIP: StumbleUpon also seems to keep a watchful eye out for users who submit lots of their own content.

Several users who had been submitting all of their own articles and blog posts have reported that their website URL's are now blocked from further submissions to StumbleUpon.

As with all of the Web 2.0 utilities you use to help grow and market your online presence, you'll get the best results from StumbleUpon when you:

- use moderation and common sense (in other words, don't spam)
- submit, vote on, and comment on other people's high-quality content (not just your own)

- keep it real by genuinely participating in and contributing to the value of the site on a regular basis.

Social Bookmarking at StumbleUpon

Although StumbleUpon considers itself to be mainly a “discovery engine”, it also has a social bookmarking function.

You can save and comment on your favorite content that you've stumbled – as well as share it with other users, who can then vote on and comment on it.

And although you should submit your own content sparingly to StumbleUpon, it's a good idea to vote for all of your own content that's been submitted already by other stumblers.

TIP: Also bookmark and vote for every item of ***other people's content*** on StumbleUpon that links to your site(s) or contains your syndicated content, guest columns, blog entries, etc.

To find these items, you can do searches in StumbleUpon for your name, the name of your website or blog, the title of your info-product, etc.

Voting for all of your own content (plus all of other people's content that links to or refers to your content) that you can find on StumbleUpon will help others stumble across it too.

StumbleUpon's Social Network

StumbleUpon also has a built-in social network, designed to connect people who share similar interests.

Many members use the social networking features extensively both to find useful content and to connect with like-minded people. Other members prefer to avoid the social aspect of StumbleUpon entirely and mainly use the site's stumbling and bookmarking features.

If you plan to use StumbleUpon to help grow and market your online presence, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the site's social network and how to use it to your advantage.

And regardless of whether you ever actually socialize with anyone on StumbleUpon, building your social network will give you the power to direct peoples' attention (and votes) toward whatever content you give the "thumbs up". **This power is part of what makes StumbleUpon such a significant traffic tool.**

Here's a breakdown of the social network you'll find at StumbleUpon:

Friends

"Friends" are StumbleUpon members whose content you like. When you stumble, you'll receive pages your Friends have rated favorably, based on your shared interests.

One good way to discover like-minded Friends is to visit your Network page and investigate the folks recommended there.

You can communicate with your Friends - or not. It's up to you. Choosing Friends is simply a way of letting StumbleUpon know what kind of content you want to find when you stumble, regardless of whether you ever actually interact with the Friends who have given that content the "thumbs up".

As another anti-spam feature of StumbleUpon, you **cannot** message more than one of your Friends at a time. However, you can send a total of up to 150 messages in a 24-hour period.

Fans

"Fans" are members who have added you as one of their Friends – but you haven't reciprocated. You can find a list of your Fans at the bottom of your Friends tab.

Your Fans will stumble upon your favorite content that covers the topics which interest them.

A full box next to a StumbleUpon member's name means she has a lot of Fans; an empty box means she doesn't have any Fans yet.

Having a lot Fans makes your "thumbs up" and "thumbs down" votes more influential, since your votes affect the content that these users will see.

Sponsors

Most StumbleUpon users sign up for the basic free membership – which is all most people ever need.

But as you might guess, “Sponsors” have signed up for a paid level of StumbleUpon membership (at the price of US\$20 per year, as of this writing), which entitles them to extra features, including the ability to:

- see the groups of Friends they share with other members
- see the pages they've voted “thumbs up” whenever they search Google or Yahoo
- turn “sponsored stumbles” (advertisements) on or off
- have copies of all their PM's (private messages) emailed to them
- create new StumbleUpon Groups.

Most members never need these additional features, but many of StumbleUpon's power-users find them useful.

A green box next to the name of a StumbleUpon member indicates that he is a Sponsor. (Non-sponsors are blue.)

Groups / Forums

A "Group" is a gathering of StumbleUpon members with similar interests.

The easiest way to find and join StumbleUpon Groups related to your interests is to click on the "Join Group" button on your Profile page. From there you can investigate the list of all currently open Groups.

Each Group has its own discussion area called a "Forum", where only the Group's members can read and post messages.

Sponsors are the only StumbleUpon members who can start new Groups.

Top Stumblers

"Top Stumblers" are the "most active and helpful community members" of StumbleUpon. These users suggest new content and rate sites on a regular basis.

The more you participate in StumbleUpon, the higher your stumbler rank will climb.

One benefit of being a Top Stumbler is that your profile receives increased exposure to other members – meaning that you can gain a lot more Fans and other followers who will investigate the content you vote for.

How to Build Your StumbleUpon

Social Network

for a Big Traffic Boost

Even if you don't use StumbleUpon's social networking feature for interacting with others, it helps you discover high-quality, relevant content – and just as importantly, it puts the content you submit and vote for in front of a lot of potentially interested viewers.

If you have a large collection of Friends and Fans at StumbleUpon, the content that you give the “thumbs up” is likely to be visited by **thousands** of people – just because of your vote.

So it's definitely worthwhile to put a little effort into building your social network there. Fortunately, it's also fairly easy.

Here are some ways you can quickly build up your StumbleUpon social network:

- Post a link to your StumbleUpon profile on your website, blog, or newsletter – and ask your readers to add you to their Friends. You might mention all the fantastic content you've been stumbling across related to your niche, and say that by adding you as their Friend, your readers will automatically stumble across the high-quality content that you give the “thumbs up”.
- Simply use StumbleUpon often. The more you stumble, submit, and vote, the more other members with similar interests will find you and want to receive the content you like.
- If your website or blog uses a “contact” form for your readers to communicate with you, add your StumbleUpon profile link to the “thank you” page that pops up after people submit their contact message. If they're interested enough in your content to contact you, they may very well be interested in the content you stumble.
- Add other StumbleUpon members who share your interests to your Friends list. A significant percentage of them will reciprocate and add **you to their** Friends list.
- Login to StumbleUpon and go to http://www.stumbleupon.com/find_friends.php , where you can import your email contacts from AOL, Gmail, MSN, and Yahoo. You'll see which of these people are already using StumbleUpon, and be able to invite your

friends, family, and associates to join. Also be sure to send your StumbleUpon profile link to all of these folks.

- Add your StumbleUpon profile link to the resource box of some of your syndicated articles, with the enticement of “if you only could see what I see!” or something that piques people's curiosity enough to investigate.
- When you do trackbacks of other people's blog posts, put your StumbleUpon profile link next to the corresponding post on your own blog. That way the other blogger's readers who visit **your** blog can discover your profile, and may decide to add you as one of their Friends.
- Add your StumbleUpon profile link to your social bookmarks and to your content in other Web 2.0 sites such del.icio.us, Squidoo, etc.
- Post your StumbleUpon profile link on your eBay “About Me” page.
- Join some relevant StumbleUpon Groups and participate in their Forums.

TIP: Whenever you vote “thumbs up”, that content will be served to your Friends and Fans who share your interests.

This can result in thousands of views over time for that item, as your Friends and Fans vote “thumbs up”, and the content is then served to **their** Friends and Fans – and so on.

The more you use StumbleUpon, the more Friends and Fans you'll acquire who share your interests – and the more impact your “thumbs up” votes will have.

What Kind of Content is Successful on StumbleUpon?

Because StumbleUpon is designed to be a “discovery engine”, people have a different intention when they use it, as compared to using other social media sites.

Many StumbleUpon members say they're addicted to it – to the thrill of being shown page after page of previously undiscovered content that's fascinating to them.

The lure of “just one more stumble...” can keep members stumbling for literally hours at a time. And often you'll find yourself spending long periods of time on an individual site you land on, because it's so interesting to you.

So with this mindset, most stumblers aren't seeking the latest-breaking news stories, sports scores, political scandals, or stuff to buy. They're surfing to discover new resources, information, and entertainment related to their passions.

People tend to use StumbleUpon for:

- research
- finding wonderful, unusual Web content that's hard to find with Google
- escapism
- entertainment
- relieving boredom
- whiling away some extra time
- networking and connecting with like-minded friends.

So it makes sense that some of the most popular content on StumbleUpon tends to be:

- photography / images
- entertaining / enlightening stories
- humor
- videos

- hobbies
- “feature” stories
- movie and entertainment-industry stories
- reports of bizarre or mysterious things
- fun things to do online (games, etc.)
- home- and lifestyle-related info
- internet and web design topics
- cultural and travel info
- health and science info
- business (especially home business) info
- arts-related topics.

Getting Started on StumbleUpon

1. To sign up for your free StumbleUpon account, go to http://www.stumbleupon.com/sign_up.php . (Note that it's against StumbleUpon's Terms and Conditions for an individual user to have more than one account.)
2. After filling in your basic data and choosing your username, you can download the StumbleUpon tool bar: <http://www.stumbleupon.com/download.php> .
3. Take some time to experiment with using the toolbar to stumble around and vote on the content that's served up for you.

Pretty cool, isn't it? :o)

Stumbling Tips

- If you're receiving content that's not of interest to you when you stumble, you can go back and update your topic preferences at <http://www.stumbleupon.com/interests.php> . When you've finished changing your topic preferences, be sure to save your changes before leaving that page.
- On the StumbleUpon toolbar, check out the dropdown menu called "All" that enables you to stumble in many different ways. Try these various options and see how they work for you. Also consider using these options to get more focused results whenever you're stumbling for specific content.
- Find interesting sites to visit by viewing other StumbleUpon users' profiles and seeing what sites they like.
- Go to StumbleUpon's "Popular Tags" page - <http://www.stumbleupon.com/tag/> - and choose a tag to stumble around in.

How to Submit Content to StumbleUpon

1. To add your own website, blog entry, or any other high-quality Web content to StumbleUpon, first go to the page you want to submit.
2. In your StumbleUpon toolbar, click the "thumbs up" positive-vote icon.
3. If the page is already part of StumbleUpon's database (meaning that it's been previously submitted by someone else), you'll simply be adding a positive vote for it.
4. But if it hasn't been submitted yet, you'll receive a little pop-up box asking you to enter a description and tags for this content. For the tags and in the description, use a couple of targeted general keywords as well as a couple of more specific ones, so that this content can be stumbled upon by a broad spectrum of interested members.
5. Click the "submit" button.

The Quality of StumbleUpon Traffic that Comes to Your Website

The traffic you receive from StumbleUpon can be “easy come, easy go”. It's so simple for users to just keep clicking on the “stumble” button to see what pops up next, that they may give each landing page only a brief glance before stumbling on to discover the next treasure.

Or they may land on your page but find it not quite targeted to their particular interests, and vote “thumbs down”. Not everyone who stumbles across your content will love it. So you'll have to expect a certain amount of “bounce” traffic.

But if you have high-quality, unique content you'll probably also receive some very thrilled, very targeted visitors who wonder where your site has been all their life!

These visitors will spend some time exploring more of your content, subscribe to your newsletter and/or RSS feed, and spread the word about your site via forums, other social media sites, their own blog or newsletter, etc.

These are the new visitors who are the most valuable to your online business – and fortunately StumbleUpon's method of matching content to stumblers can send you a high percentage of this type of visitor, compared to other Web 2.0 sites.

Tips for Getting More Traffic from StumbleUpon

The more you use StumbleUpon, the more (and better) it will work for you.

That's because the more you use the system, the more of your submissions and votes you'll have in the database, to be seen and rated by other users. You'll also wind up accumulating more StumbleUpon Friends and Fans, as an increasing number of members with similar interests gravitate to your favorite content – which means more people seeing and voting for the content you've given the “thumbs up”.

Simple Things You Can Do to Get the Maximum Traffic from StumbleUpon:

- Use StumbleUpon daily. It's easy to vote honestly with a quick “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” click for the content you come across as you go about your Internet business - or to submit interesting, high-quality items that aren't yet in the database.
- Encourage your readers and subscribers to use StumbleUpon; this will increase the number of StumbleUpon users who share your interests – and who will then submit, stumble upon, and vote on your content, as well as become your Friends and Fans.
- Vote for interesting content created by and about other people – not just your own stuff; be careful not look like your stumbling is all self-serving, or the system may mark you as a spammer.
- When you submit content to StumbleUpon, choose a specific page from the site that will capture fellow members' interest (which is not always the site's home page). For example, submit a specific blog post, article, or image.
- Add Friends whenever you find StumbleUpon members who like the content you also like. These people may add you in return, and they'll then see the content you vote for.
- Consider joining StumbleUpon Groups that closely relate to your interests, and then participate in the Groups' forums; this exposes your profile to a

lot of people who share your interests and may want to become your Friends and Fans.

- You may want to hold off on voting for your own content until you've built a large base of Friends and Fans who will then stumble across it and vote for it – giving it more exposure.
- Vote for all StumbleUpon content that contains any links or references to your websites or products.
- Vote for all StumbleUpon content that contains your syndicated content, guest articles, or other guest content. Voting for these sites builds traffic and backlinks to them – which then makes **their** links to **your** site stronger. Everybody wins!
- Be sure to choose the best, most accurate StumbleUpon category for the content you submit. That will help it get more positive votes.
- When tagging content within StumbleUpon, opt for more general tags instead of ultra-specific ones. That makes your content more likely to turn up in StumbleUpon searches, and to be stumbled upon by other members.
- Find a couple of Top Stumblers who share your interests, and add them to your Friends. There's a chance they may reciprocate, and add you as one of their Friends too. Then the content you give the “thumbs up” will be served to them – and subsequently to their massive social network. Top Stumblers are influential, and their votes tend to send **a lot** of traffic.
- Place one of the StumbleUpon button links in the sidebar of your website, or next to each article / post – and encourage your readers to use it. Many people would be happy to submit or vote for your content, but they might not think of it unless you remind them.

You may (or may not) see immediate traffic from your StumbleUpon efforts – but over time, it should send you a steady, increasing amount of very targeted visitors.

The more StumbleUpon members are exposed to your content, the more they pass it along to their social network, forums, family, friends, etc. - both within and outside of StumbleUpon.

Get the Maximum Benefit from Your StumbleUpon Visitors

Because visitors who come to your site from StumbleUpon tend to be very targeted to your content, your most profitable move is not to monetize them immediately – but to turn them into repeat visitors or subscribers.

That means your StumbleUpon traffic-building strategy should be geared toward

- branding (making visitors aware of your site / business, and how it can benefit them)
- long-term traffic growth.

It would be a shame to get such potentially valuable, targeted visitors to your site – and then lose them right away in exchange for an AdSense click that earns you 10 or 20 cents.

So instead of trying for immediate monetization, use your StumbleUpon traffic advantage to build up your readership and subscriber list fast. Try some of the ideas in this next section:

How to Turn Your StumbleUpon Traffic into Regular Visitors

First let's think about the mindset of someone who's using StumbleUpon. He's having an enjoyable time stumbling and discovering fascinating new Web content that relates to his interests and passions.

As he stumbles, he comes across beautiful photos, clever online games, and interesting articles – and votes “thumbs up” on them as he goes along.

What's going to happen if he suddenly lands on a pageful of Google AdSense ads and other advertising?

He'll either quickly click “stumble” again to go directly to another neat site – or he'll take the time to vote “thumbs down” before going on to another neat site.

But either way, he won't stay on the ad-filled page or explore the site it belongs to. Why should he, when his mouse is still hovering over “stumble”, and another neat site is just a click away?

This brings us to....

What NOT to Have on Your Landing Page

- A boring or visually unappealing layout
- anything that looks or feels like spam
- commercialism, sales pitches, or ads – especially above the fold (the top half of the page)
- a home page that doesn't give any hint of why the stumbler should like the rest of the site
- lots of tight, cramped text
- a slow-loading page
- anything ambiguous (they won't stay to figure out why they should care about it)
- content that's been incorrectly categorized in StumbleUpon (for example, an excellent page about men's basketball will unfortunately earn a quick “thumbs down” from people who are stumbling to discover content on creative quilting projects).

TIP: The content that gets voted “thumbs up” tends to be attractive, interesting, entertaining, and relevant to the stumbler's interests.

Ways to Convert Stumblers to Regular Visitors

- Make the best first impression you possibly can.
- Make it easy for stumblers to subscribe, by placing your newsletter subscription box and RSS feed link above the fold of your pages, and again at the end of your articles or blog posts.
- Offer an interesting, on-topic ebook, report, or other freebie to new subscribers.
- Opt for an attractive, simple page layout.
- Concentrate on providing unique, useful information throughout your site.
- Consider having some sort of “sticky” content or “link bait” on your landing page that stumblers will want to return to.
- Take the time to create a clever or catchy headline for your landing page's article or blog post – something that encourages a stumbler whose mouse is hovering over the “stumble” button to pause and read more.
- Encourage stumblers to experience more of your website by embedding links to other pages of your content (ideally to some of your very best content!) within your landing page article or post.
- Respond to all blog comments as soon as possible. People are more interested in sites where the publisher interacts with them.
- After having your content stumbled, add further exceptionally outstanding content to your site over the next month or so – to impress your new readers and subscribers into sticking around instead of unsubscribing.
- Include an interesting video or eye-catching image in the top fold of the page.
- Blend in any ads attractively with the rest of the page. They also should be closely targeted to the page's content and used sparingly.
- Submit only your highest-quality, most stumbler-friendly pages to StumbleUpon.

Advertising on StumbleUpon

Did you know that some of the pages you stumble across are actually paid advertisements?

These paid pages are included in stumbles just as though they were regular pages from the StumbleUpon database – and although some of them stand out as obvious ads or commercial home pages, in many cases you'd never guess you've stumbled across a paid page.

In StumbleUpon's advertising program, advertisers pay 5 cents (as of this writing) per visitor. The advertiser can choose traffic based on the members' interests, demographic information, and other variables. Then the designated ad page is shown randomly to stumblers who fit the chosen traffic and interest profile.

The advertising program does a good job of delivering qualified traffic to the paid pages.

However, the tricky part is that people who are stumbling are in a “discovery” mindset, and tend to be annoyed with content that hints of advertising or commercialism as they stumble.

When StumbleUpon visitors land on an ad page that feels commercial, they're likely to click “stumble” again right away, without reading the page or even voting on it. If they do vote, they often vote “thumbs down”, to tell the system they don't want to have ads served to them again.

Even when paid landing pages do receive a lot of positive votes, many StumbleUpon advertisers say actual sales conversions are low or non-existent – and that StumbleUpon advertising might be most effective for branding.

One possible strategy for better results: Instead having paid visitors land directly on your sales page or home page, experiment with a creative, interesting, attractive “pre-selling” landing page. From that page you can either link to more info in case they want to know more, or offer a freebie (such as a high-quality ebook, report, etc.) that they can download in exchange for giving you their email address. Then you can market to them via newsletter or autoresponder.

On the upside, StumbleUpon says there's no click fraud in their advertising program since they send visitors directly from stumbles, and there's no way for anyone to affect that.

For more info on StumbleUpon's advertising program:
<http://www.stumbleupon.com/ads/> .

TIP: Before paying to advertise on StumbleUpon, max out all the free tips and tricks mentioned in this ebook first.

Other Helpful Utilities within StumbleUpon

- **StumbleUpon's Blog**
<http://blog.stumbleupon.com/>
Keep up with the latest features and innovations on StumbleUpon by subscribing to the the site's blog feed.
- **Post Stories from Your Blog**
<http://www.stumbleupon.com/buttons.php?pgtype=blog>
Add a "Stumble this!" button link to your website or next to your article / blog post, enabling your readers to submit your content easily to StumbleUpon.
- **Share Your Favorite Videos**
<http://www.stumbleupon.com/buttons.php?pgtype=videos>
Add a button link to share videos from My Space, Friendster, Facebook and other websites.
- **Link to Your Profile**
<http://www.stumbleupon.com/buttons.php?pgtype=profile>
A big variety of button links to choose from that let you share your StumbleUpon profile with your readers.

Third-Party StumbleUpon Resources and Tools

These WordPress plugins were created by members of the StumbleUpon community.

(Note: the authors of this ebook have not extensively tested these plugins; please exercise due diligence before downloading and using them).

- **Share This**
<http://alexking.org/projects/wordpress>
Lets your visitors add your content to social bookmarking sites (including StumbleUpon) and email your blog post to a friend.
- **StumbleCrumble**
<http://tuggo.org/projects/stumblecrumble/>
Customizable plugin that displays the websites you've recently stumbled upon.