

The power of online marketing and PR

There are more than one billion Internet users worldwide and the online population in South Africa is growing each year. "Currently at 3 600 000 users, South Africa's broadband adoption rate jumped by 30% in Q3 2005, making it one of the fastest growing emerging internet markets in the world," says international speaker Sally Falkow, who will be in South Africa to hold a one-day internet marketing and PR seminar in Cape Town on 7 June 2006.

"The demographics of South African internet users is changing," says Falkow. "They are no longer techno-whiz kids - they are much more like the man in the street."

45.4% access the internet from work, 40.9% from home and 23,3% from elsewhere, reports the *Independent Online*. Almost half of South Africa's web users are aged 25 - 44 (27% are within the 35 - 44 year age group) and users over 55 have increased from 10% of total users in 2002 to 16% last year.

As the public turns to the Internet for news and information, traditional media outlets are feeling the pinch. Newspaper and magazine circulation are down and even the TV network bosses acknowledge they are losing audiences to the Internet. Online retail in South Africa grew by 20% in 2005 and studies show that more than two thirds of all purchases, whether online or offline, are researched on the Internet prior to purchase.

Marketing and PR people are looking for ways to reach this lucrative online audience and, according to Falkow, this seminar will give them the data they need.

"The Marketing Sherpa Benchmark report highlighted the need for PR and marketing folk to learn about how to reach their online audiences," says Falkow, "It's a new world online with new rules. But the rewards can be enormous. The seminar covers all aspects of online marketing and PR."

Falkow will just have come from the Search Engine Strategies Conference in London where she will be presenting the latest ideas in online PR and news search. "Marketing Sherpa rated online news search as one of the top three techniques companies need to implement in 2006," she comments.

Search engine optimisation and online advertising

The seminar will also cover search engine optimisation and online advertising. This section of the seminar will be presented by Leon Lategan of Purple Cow Communications, Cape Town. Lategan trained in the US with one of the gurus of search techniques, Bruce Clay, who is now a partner in the agency.

The cost of the seminar is R1500 for the day and includes refreshments and materials. There is an early bird special of

R1250, available till 15 May. Register online at http://www.expansionplus.com/SEO_seminar_form.html. For more information, go to http://www.expansionplus.com/SEO_seminar.html.

Bizcommunity.com is the online media partner to this event.

Internet population growth in South Africa				
Year	Users	Population	% pen.	Usage source
2000	2 400 000	43 690 000	5.5	ITU
2001	2 750 000	44 409 700	6.2	IWS
2002	3 100 000	45 129 400	6.8	ITU
2003	3 283 000	45 919 200	7.1	Wide World Worx
2004	3 523 000	47 556 900	7.4	Wide World Worx
2005	3 600 000	48 861 805	7.4	Wide World Worx

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