

Software Review: [Desktop Lightning](#) – Strengths and Weaknesses

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From: The Desk of Ernest O'Dell – Guerrilla Internet Marketing
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If you've been following what's been going on in the Internet Marketing scene then I'm sure you've at least heard about [DesktopLightning.com](#) by now.

A lot of people are saying really good things about the site, but are they true?

I decided to write up an honest review of the site, covering what I believe to be its strengths and its weaknesses, just to clear it up once and for all...

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Overall Rating: 4.5 / 5 stars (* * * * ½)

In A Nutshell

[Desktop Lightning 2.0](#) is a catchy new viral marketing tool, capable of broadcasting messages directly to people's desktops. Version 1.0 came out about 4 or 5 years ago, and has been greatly improved in its newer version. It's easy to use, and caters primarily to those who have something they want to promote and are looking for a better way to do it.

(Read on for why I didn't give it 5 stars)

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Initial Impressions

I was first introduced to [DesktopLightning.com](#) through Cognigen about 5 years ago, but I wasn't quite sure exactly what to think of it. Everyone was saying it was going to be more powerful than e-mail marketing, but this seemed like too bold of a claim.

I signed up anyway, since I usually give things a chance—that's how I have found the several sites I do really trust and rely on.

The signup process only took about 60 seconds as advertised, and their software program downloaded and installed in about 30 seconds. No long, tedious install processes here. If you own downloadable software, you might want to take a look at how quick their install process is.

All their functions run on their proprietary servers, so you have just a small executable module that runs on your computer. As long as you're connected to the Internet, you can do all the functions it has. *(And if you're on a high-speed Internet connection, this is really fast.)*

Right after installing the software, it ran immediately, and I was quickly presented with a tool to invite my friends. There are several ways you can invite your friends and connections with DesktopLightning: you can manually insert their email addresses, or you can log on to your FaceBook, MySpace, or other web 2.0 social networking sites.

Another way is to export your email addresses into a .csv file from your email client, or from your web based email. All the instructions are right there in their program.

After I sent out an invitation to all my contacts, I was one click from my Inbox, where I could check my messages. You can always come back to the “Build Your Network” page to send broadcasts, or invite new groups of people. There's also a statistics page, where you can check to see your network.

I'll get more into why that's my favorite page later.

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Viral Growth

This is where the site really shines, in my opinion. The purpose of a viral marketing site is that you should be able to invite just a few people, and then it will start growing on its own. Many sites claim to work like this, but few actually work as advertised.

I'm not sure if it's because of their unique concept or the slick implementation, but this site is REALLY viral. Here's some of the testimonials they got, which I think sum it up pretty well:

"I haven't ever seen a system build a downline so fast. I joined your program just to try something new. Four days later I had a downline of 43 people. This is unbelievable." ~ Harry Joseph

"I invited just a handful of people only a few days ago and I already have 48 members on 5 levels below me. I am going to keep promoting this, but I see it has a life of it's own now. I couldn't stop my network from expanding if I wanted to!" ~ David Parton

"This website is so viral - I received over 100 sign-ups and my network is already 5 levels deep in less than 48 hours." ~ Rene Keiser

"Myself, I sent out invitations to all my FaceBook and Twitter contacts, and all my other social network (Web 2.0) sites, and now have over 200,000 members. This is better than "list building" in the old traditional sense, and brings in over a quarter million dollars a month in revenue!" ~ Ernest O'Dell - Guerrilla Internet Marketing

Although they obviously can't guarantee results for anyone, the general consensus is that most people who do get those initial few people in are experiencing results similar to these.

I give [DesktopLightning.com](#) an A+ for spreading like wildfire.

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Direct-To-Desktop Broadcasts

So, once you have the people in your network from the direct invitations and the viral growth, then it really gets cool. Now is when you get to broadcast whatever message you want directly to their desktops.

Gone are the days of sending out emails and wondering if they were received due to spam filters and crowded Inboxes. If you publish a weekly or monthly newsletter/ezine, this is a great way to distribute your articles. It's paradigm is similar to email and RSS, but works much simpler because it's always running in the background on your computer.

(If you upgrade to their Platinum membership, then you can even get exact statistics on the percentage of your broadcasts that were opened, but the Platinum membership is not the subject of this review.)

Here's how it works—the [DesktopLightning.com](#) software is what allows the direct-to-desktop communication to be received. Since everyone in your network will have the [DesktopLightning.com](#) application installed, just as you do, this is what allows such smooth and instant communication to occur.

Within one hour of your sending the message, everyone in your network who is online will receive a notification on their desktop that they can click to read your message at their leisure.

Anyone who isn't online at the time will receive it the next time they log on to the Internet.

I'm sure you can see why this type of communication has been more successful than email as of late, so I won't get into it too much here. The basic point though is that there's no way your message can be lost, overlooked, or blocked by any filters.

If you upgrade to their Platinum service you can do things like embed video and sound right into the broadcast, but again, I'll save the Platinum service for another review.

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Building Your Network

Most sites out there nowadays don't really help you build a network of people below you. They just give you a URL and throw you to the wolves and tell you to run with it.

While this works well for most people who are familiar with the intricacies of the Internet, it's not something that's very easy for people who are just starting out.

[DesktopLightning.com](#) really “bent over backwards” this time to make sure that this new version was friendlier for everyone. They have done a great job by giving you a way to bring people into your network, regardless of skill level.

And, because so many people are using Twitter, FaceBook and other social network sites, this can really be a great business builder for you if you have something to promote.

When you click on the "Build Your Network" link from within their application, you'll be presented with a surprising number of tools to help you build your downline.

Everything from banners, to popups, to text ads, to invitation tools, to emails to send out, etc.

Then, they continue to offer something which I haven't seen on any Internet Marketing site yet—they have a "Starting From Scratch" section, designed specifically for people who have no list and no website with traffic.

If you're in that position, then you'll love this section, since they detail specific strategies you can use to promote [DesktopLightning.com](#) (or anything else for that matter), even if you don't have anything to start with.

Quite a valuable resource.

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Not For Everyone

With all that said, the only downside to [DesktopLightning.com](#) is that it's not for everyone.

Of course, you might see that as an upside, since it's a more targeted opportunity.

Basically, the bottom line is that [DesktopLightning.com](#) is a promotional tool. You need to have something you want to promote or advertise before you can really make use of the site.

This is all due to the fact that the basic concept is that you build a viral network of people, and then broadcast something to it... much like you might do on Twitter or FaceBook.

But, this "something" is whatever you want, so you must already have something you'd want to send to a lot of people. If you don't have anything to sell or promote, then you might want to find something first.

If you don't have something yet, you could start building your network first, and then once you get something to promote you'll have a network of people who will be ready to hear your message.

If you do have something to promote, that's where [Desktop Lightning](#) really shines.

Conclusion

I would recommend this site to **anyone** who has something to promote or advertise.

It definitely works, and your downline will grow extremely fast if you put some energy into getting it started.

The direct-to-desktop broadcasts are a killer app in today's online climate, where emails barely even get through anymore.

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The only reason I didn't give it 5 stars is that it has nothing to offer for people who don't have anything to promote or advertise yet.

If you want to advertise or promote something to a lot of people in a unique and powerful way, then this site is for you.

At any rate, my general opinion is that since it's so quick to set up and try, if you have something you want to promote you might as well go check it out.

And, who knows: you might get an email from someone else that you find you can join and promote also.

You can always remove it later if you decide you don't like it.

Here's the link where you can sign up:

<http://www.DesktopLightning.com/dmsgroup>

Enjoy! :)

Ernest ODell - Guerrilla Internet Marketing

