

Goal – motivate MAA members to explore OpenHerd

3/19/2017

OpenHerd is an alpaca marketplace with over 4,000 farms listed

MAA participates in OpenHerd's Affiliate Network, which means that MAA's website is hosted by OpenHerd

From OpenHerd's website

Openherd is a community marketplace that generates much more site traffic than an individual farm website. So it's a great place to get nationwide exposure for your farm and animals. However, sending your customers to your own website will give them a more personal, branded experience, making them more likely to do regular business with you and less likely to browse away to a competitor.

So being on Openherd AND having your own farm website is the perfect combination of nationwide exposure, and a unique destination to send your customers to, all edited in one place for one affordable price!

Search Engines –excerpt from email from Joe Preston, Openherd.com

“This is probably the most important point to make. Most people research farms online first before they visit them in person. So it's critical to have a good online presence. Most people usually start their search by using a search engine, such as Google. Search engines try to act like human beings - they try to interpret what a visitor is really looking for. In an attempt to do this, search engines typically display a variety of results on page 1: A non-profit (.org), a couple of commercial sites, an info site such as Wikipedia, some photos, videos, news, some personal sites, and sites like Openherd. Because non-profits are typically not out to make money, search engines generally give them a very good placement in the results. Since there are not going to be too many alpaca non-profits in a certain region, say Maine, that means MAA will typically get on the first page of results for a search like "alpaca farms in Maine" (comes up #1 for me with no search history and even though I'm located in CA. Give it a try).

So: It's easy to see why MAA will get probably the best placement in search engines anyone could want! So a customer clicks that link since people usually click the first link that seems to be what they're looking for. They arrive at the MAA website. They will likely click "ME Alpaca Farms" - obvious next step. Now they see 35 alpaca farms. They may narrow down by zip code or just click a few. Now, if you're not listed on there, it's easy to see why you're missing out big time on internet search traffic. If you are listed but have minimal or outdated information, it's easy to see why a visitor would click away and look at another farm who does have a lot going on.

So MAA's website offers great exposure for MAA as a whole and bringing in new members and promoting alpacas in Maine. It also, by way of the Openherd affiliate program pages for searching and member profiles, offers a great benefit to the individual farms. So both MAA and it's individual members benefit.”

Joe Preston also provided an article that he wrote a few years back but he feels is still relevant now, that uses the analogy of the Erie Canal to show that the business is out there, it's just a question of whether you're channeling that business to your farm. This article will be forwarded to all MAA members.

Click the **Join** tab on the OH Home page to view the differences between the 3 paid plans offered – Starter, Business, and Professional. Scroll to the bottom of this page for the button for Free membership.

Click the **Websites** tab on the OH Home page to explore what OH offers for your own website.

Some specific points for MAA members about Free OH sites with MAA's Affiliate Network participation-----

An MAA member must set up their farm on OpenHerd for their farm to appear on the MAA website member listing. The Free site is all you need to be on the MAA listing. **This gives your farm a presence on the internet**, especially important if you do not have your own farm website.

Free site –

Without MAA membership

Your farm's exposure on OH is limited.

Number of animals for sale is limited to 5 when viewing from www.openherd.com

You select which 5 to appear under "My 5"

Store with Paypal Checkout is not available with the Free site

If you have your own farm website, the URL will show on your OH page, but it is not a link.

With MAA membership ---

Your farm's exposure on OH viewed from www.openherd.com is limited same as without MAA membership.

BUT - when viewed from www.mainealpacaassociation.com -----

Unlimited # of animals for sale when viewed from MAA website

Store with Paypal Checkout is available at no additional cost. Products for sale can be viewed only by going to MAA website first, then to your website.

If you have your own farm website, the URL is a clickable link.

TIP - put this on your HOME page if you have the Free site

To view all of our alpacas and all of our products for sale, go to www.mainealpacaassociation.com, click on ME Alpaca Farms or Search alpaca farms, scroll down the list of MAA members and click on "your farm name here"




Free site with or without MAA membership –

If someone uses the OH Email Us message block, you will get email notification that you have a message, but the notification does not include the message. Log in to your OH site to view the message.

TIP - create a Contact Us page and put your email address under Contact Us so you can be contacted directly

With a Paid plan the full message come thru to your email.

Everyone should be getting an email like this (below) with the subject -Your Weekly Update- from OpenHerd. If not, contact support@openherd.com

Pamelamas LLC			
Last login	Thu 03/09/17	Log In	
Membership	Business Exp. 12/01/17	Details	
New Messages	20	View	

Active Auctions	0	Manage	□
Animals Listed	2	My Herd	□
Products	40	Manage	□
Services	0	Manage	□
Web Pages	11	Pages	□
Articles	0	Articles	□
Last Blog	Thu 06/12/14	Blogs	□
Page Views	191 (-2%)	Stats	□

My Account