

The Online Marketing Primer

HOW YOUR COMPANY CAN USE ONLINE MARKETING TO INCREASE PROFITS



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A Letter from the President

Dear Friend;

Thank you for your interest in CorporationCentre.ca!

We offer you this ebook to help you on your way to becoming a successful and thriving business. As a leader in online legal document filing services, we continually strive to simplify and streamline the business start-up process for small businesses. This ebook is just one more way in which we want to help to facilitate your start-up experience and make your dreams a reality.

CorporationCentre.ca recognizes the vast potential of the Internet to deliver knowledge-based services and products efficiently to small businesses. Seizing the opportunity to reach this market, we created a single Canadian online destination where business owners and corporations can obtain the complete spectrum of legal document filing services directly from our website.

From incorporating a company, preparing annual government filings, registering the sale of shares, dissolving a company, applying for a Canadian trademark or registering a domain name, we are Canada's one-stop online corporate solutions destination for corporations.

As an online business, we understand the vast potential of the internet as a medium that small business can tap into, to easily and efficiently connect with potential and current customers. The internet gives businesses a more even playing field when it comes to marketing – the relatively new concept of online marketing means that all businesses must learn to adjust and adapt to the ever-changing nature online and to engage with consumers in new and exciting ways. CorporationCentre.ca wants to see your start-up thrive, and the first step to a successful business is marketing.

The aim of this ebook is to help newly formed small businesses with the first steps towards marketing your company. The guide provides an overview on best practices and methods to attract and retain customers online by using marketing initiatives such as content building, blogging, e-mail marketing and social media. We hope that you find value in this e-guide and you are able to benefit from the tips and tools outlined. We wish you best of luck on your start-up adventure!

Best regards,

Lionel J. Perez
President, CorporationCentre.ca

“We are Canada's one-stop online corporate solutions destination for corporations.”

Introduction

Imagine this. Your new company has created a new product. It's great, it's cheaper than your competitors', it looks beautiful – so much so that it should be in an art museum. You spent gazillions on a great website! You sent out a nice technical press releases to all the top publications in your industry, did some linking with industry related directories and...you wait. And wait.

Nothing. Nada. Not even after a month. Maybe a few here and there, a few nibbles. But not the wow that you expected...

For some reason Google has simply strolled on by your crazy awesome website and never gave it a glance. Your prospects didn't even get a chance to take a look.

What did you do wrong?!

We've created this report so that you can learn the basics of online marketing so that you will learn how to:

- Research your online market
- Create great content for your site
- Get Google to love you
- Make your customers get excited
- Get your customers even more excited! And start telling others!

I hope that you find it informative and entertaining but more importantly... it makes you MONEY!



Online Keyword Research

TARGET! TARGET! TARGET!

All online marketers should have this drilled into them. To be successful you must target. However, you won't be able to target if you don't know how to do your research. And one way to research your online clientele is through keyword research on search engines or more specifically – Google.

With keywords playing such a dominant role in driving consumers to websites, you need to compete strongly. If you are not competing strongly, your business is losing a significant amount of money.

Internet marketing is crucial for businesses that operate exclusively online, as well as for more traditional, bricks-and-mortar businesses. Search engines dominate the Internet, forcing businesses to compete for online rankings. So, understanding the importance of keywords and how to select the best ones for your business will not only determine your company's online search engine ranking, but the quantity and quality of traffic driven to your website.

THE KEYWORD PHRASE MYTH

There has been a myth that people should target the most trafficked keywords in order drive organic and paid traffic. Unfortunately, marketers are making a mistake in regards to choosing the keywords. It's not the keyword that drives the most traffic that they should be focusing on, but the keywords that creates the most conversions towards the ultimate goal.

The keywords that you use in all of your company's content will affect your search engine rankings, and ultimately your website's traffic. Earlier schools of thought taught that choosing general keywords that best related to your target market was the best way to appeal to the largest number of visitors; thereby garnering more traffic – and more sales – as a result.

This is no longer true, at least for some businesses.

Instead of using a single keyword term, marketers should be focused on longer phrase keywords (otherwise known as long-tail keywords). These long-tail keywords provide higher conversions than the shorter, more generic single term keywords. The reason behind this is that searchers are looking for something specific versus a very generic keyword which is too broad.

It's important to use these long-tail keyword phrases that are unique to your business. You will face less competition making it easier to get ranked in the search engines. They also give you higher conversion rates as they attract much more relevant traffic to your website – those who are highly motivated in finding your product or service.

Think of how people search online. Normally, prospects start with a broad search and then narrow the results down through multiple searches using various keyword phrases. The majority of online users are now aware that the more specific your search terms are, the easier it is to find the right result.

People are looking for something specific when they type in a longer keyword phrase into a search engine. That's another reason why you shouldn't necessarily worry about not coming up in the first set of search results.

For some businesses, targeting long tail keywords brings the best results, especially in terms of conversion rates. Long tail keywords help you more effectively target groups of customers and out-convert the competition. Consider this example:

You have a juice bar in San Diego, California. Your first list of keywords might look like this:

- Juice Bars California
- San Diego Juice Bars
- West Coast Juice Bars

However, you may find that you have lots of competition for these search terms, as they are quite general and non-specific.

The long tail keyword strategy incorporates terms that a smaller group of users (and potential customers) is likely to type into the search box. Your long tail list might look something like this:

- List of juice bars in San Diego California
- Cheap juice bars on the west coast
- The best juice bars in the San Diego area

By using the long tail keyword strategy, your website's content will attract visitors actively searching for the above information, and that are ready to buy now; as a result, your conversion rate will dramatically increase.

SYNONYMS

To understand what your prospects are searching for in order to leverage the power of keywords, you will need to develop a comprehensive list of keywords for your business. There are online and software keyword tools that you can use as well as manual exercises to help you choose the best keywords for your business.

One of the most effective and free keyword suggestion tools is Google Keyword Tool. This tool will be able to give you a list of relevant long tail keywords for your business for no cost. Even if you choose to use a keyword tool, understanding the manual process of keyword analysis is important to drive the best results possible. For example, if you own a travel business in Houston, TX; here are some possible keywords to consider:

- Travel company Houston
- Houston Travel Company
- Houston Travel Services
- Houston TX Travel Services

Again, using general keywords may appeal to the widest audience possible, but probably won't give you the results that you are after due to the amount of competition. As you brainstorm possibilities, consider any combination of relevant words that someone may type into the search engine to locate your type of business. Use as many synonyms, abbreviations and word combinations that you can think of. You will likely develop an extensive list of keywords, but it is a great place to start your marketing campaign as they will all have some relevance to your business' products and services.

In the early days, marketers used to keyword stuff each page in order to achieve high rankings for a specific term. However, Google has

changed the rules to prevent that. Now, the more keyword phrases you place on a single page of your website, it becomes harder to achieve high search engine rankings for your chosen page. You should also focus on different keyword phrases for different pages of your site, again up to a maximum of 3 per page. The main content on your web pages will naturally allow search engines to find alternative longer keyword phrases.

Content Marketing

It's a common saying amongst online marketers that "Content is king".

But why?

With the recent Google Panda update the industry of Search Engine Optimization was turned inside out. It used to be that marketers could game Google by uploading thousands of keyword stuffed articles with backlinks. Now, that has changed.

Google decided that for a website to be valuable, not only must the website have valuable content, it must be compelling enough that people would want to share it with others either through backlinks, or through social media and email. The more people share that particular piece of content – the more valuable the site becomes for those keywords. By providing valuable content keeps people coming back, increases trust in you and attracts links to your site. Keeping people coming back is good but the real benefits are increasing trust and attracting links.

So, how can you get people to let others know about your content and keep coming back? It is by creating:

- Helpful, original content that your prospects aren't able to find anywhere else
- Content that solves their problem
- Or provides readers/customers with an unique perspective

As a result, your website's content plan plays a vital role in your online success. Take the time to do your research and plan your content strategy out. Start with:

- Knowing who your target audience is
- Understand what they are looking for when they come to your website, make the content useful
- Usable – the content highlights your product and service in a way that solves your readers problems
- Plan out your editorial calendar and determine what kind of content will interest your readers
- And finally how will you deliver that content.
- The two E's: To stand out, you have to make sure that your content is Educational and Entertaining your audience.

Adding new content that is of good quality and value to people will increase the number of people who view your content and link to

it because they see it as a valuable resource. This is why successful bloggers focus less on other online marketing strategies and more on content marketing. By offering great content, they've built a loyal group of readers. Every post they publish always get linked to from their fans and shared.

Here are some key elements that your online content strategy should include:

- **Know your audience.** As mentioned earlier, you should do your keyword research. By understanding what keywords and phrases your readers search for, you'll understand the kind of content to create. Know your audience – learn who they are, and how you can reach them with the right content.
- **Create an editorial calendar.** It's easy to get lost with all the tasks that you have to do to manage your online marketing. Like a business plan, the editorial calendar will provide you with the focus in creating your content. This will be your guide in determining what topics to write about, where to publish it, what medium it will be on and when to publish. Create a calendar that will cover at least 3 months.
- **Your content must support marketing objectives.** Like any marketing tactic, your content goals should be to acquire new prospects and convince them to take the next step in purchasing. Content marketing allows you to build credibility, relationships and loyalty without having to resort to a push or interruption based sales strategy.
- **Provides useful information.** By knowing what your prospects want, you are in a better position to provide content that resonates with them. Content marketing employs a pull strategy, bringing in readers with content that solves their immediate problems.

- **Strengthens a company's branding.** Your company can create a story around your brand, connecting with readers in a way that you can't with ads.
- **Create and distribute content over a range of platforms.** You are not limited to just writing articles. You can create videos, podcasts, ebooks, case studies, mini-sites and more. Remember, the bigger goal is to keep your audience informed and entertained within your brand messaging.
- **Purpose is to drive customer action.** Like any marketing tactic, content marketing must drive customer action. Be it downloading a whitepaper or getting them to sign-up to a newsletter, every content that you promote must have measurable, call to actions that leads your prospect down a lead nurturing funnel.

Creating content to build reader loyalty requires an understanding of their information needs and also an understanding of search engine optimization principles. By keeping your content fresh, original and distributed widely, you will have the best chance of driving organic traffic to your company's website and keep them coming back.

“Successful bloggers focus less on other online marketing strategies and more on content marketing. By offering great content, they've built a loyal group of readers.”

Email Marketing

According to Wikipedia, email marketing is usually referred to as, “...sending email messages with the purpose of enhancing the relationship of a merchant with its current or previous customers, to encourage customer loyalty and repeat business...” It shouldn’t just be an email response delivered when you are out of the office. They should be an important part of your online marketing toolkit. For many marketers, creating that email list, especially one that trusts you – is a goldmine!

Email marketing is where you can communicate with your audience directly through their email. This could include sending direct marketing, branding or even advertising messages. By providing you with an email address, your audience has indicated that they want your content and are interested in learning more about your company. It is considered to be second only to search marketing as the best online marketing tactic!

In general, most people describe email marketing as building a list with the goals of growing reader loyalty and making sales. One of the most popular ways to grow your email list is through a newsletter, by sending emails containing tips along with items that their readers could buy.



SO WHY SHOULD YOU USE EMAIL MARKETING?

A good email list that is managed well, will not only increase reader loyalty because of the great content you send them, but also increase revenue as they trust your recommendations.

For many online marketers, using email as a marketing tool is great because it is profitable. This is because of the following:

1. **Cost** – Similarly to a print direct mail campaign in execution but much, much lower costs. In some cases, the cost of running mass email campaigns can run in pennies per reader!
2. **Speed** – If you plan out your campaigns well, crafting a message, cleaning your list, and delivering your email can be fast.
3. **Personalization** – The more you learn about your readers, the more your message can be customized to each person. With the tools out there, you can easily segment your message to your various client types, resulting in a higher conversion rate.
4. **Viral** – Great content is always shared and it's very easy to share email content to your friends.
5. **Tracking and metrics** – You are able to track every possible action that your reader performs in your email. This is valuable as you can optimize your campaigns to perform better.
6. **Compliments your other tactics** – It is a great fit for your integrated marketing campaigns, providing you with another tool in your marketing arsenal.

HOW EMAIL CAN FIT IN YOUR CUSTOMER LEAD NURTURING LIFECYCLE?

Your customers have a lifecycle with your company.

1. They start as a brand new customer,
2. Then are active when they make purchases on your website,
3. And then they move on to another better company and forget about you.

Throughout the entire process, email can be a great way acquire new business and convert them into loyal customers.

With the abundance of email software tools out there, it has become easier to create both inbound lead nurturing campaigns and outbound broadcast campaigns. You are able to personalize emails for the recipient, allowing for greater open rates and, of course, conversions.

You can easily acquire new customers, and can also continue to nurture your customers after the first sale. By sending your existing customer base reminders, promotional offers or even newsletters will give them a reason to come back. Much like any marketing tactic, you must plan ahead of time, for if you don't, you could be missing out on a great opportunity to upsell your clients. To have an email marketing campaign be effective, you have to send the right email message at the right point in a customer's lifecycle. Here's how:

“Email can be a great way acquire new business and convert them into loyal customers.”

YOUR NEW PROSPECTS: PROVIDE PROMOTIONAL OFFERS AND COMMUNICATE YOUR BRAND

When contacting new prospects, you have to assume that they do not know who you are. Naturally they will view you with suspicion until you can build your credibility through strong branding efforts. By emphasizing your value proposition and tying it to their needs, you should be able to provide a strong case for your services.

You have to understand that email marketing serves two purposes:

- To be proactive and reach out to customers with the right message at the right time.
- And to be on top of mind, establishing your brand in the prospects' mind.

To build credibility, you should look at what your prospect is looking for to solve their problems/needs and how your product helps solve it. By consistently providing proof that your product or company can help solve their problem through:

- testimonials,
- case studies,
- online videos,
- demonstrations and articles

By making your email content interesting and also promoting your corporate brand image within the email, it makes it easier for the user to remember your company.

Encourage prospects to try your products or company's services by providing promotions such as discounts or coupons. The purpose is to reduce the barriers to purchase for your prospects so they feel that they are not taking any undue risk in using your product.

LOYAL CUSTOMERS – HOW TO KEEP THEM COMING BACK

It takes a bit of work to keep your existing customers, especially when your competitors are constantly vying for their attention. To combat your client's short attention span, use emails to reach out with weekly newsletters and promotions. By giving them relevant information and incentives, you can encourage them to continue spending.

By sending a simple weekly email with fresh content instead of just sending promotions will keep your customers engaged. For example – use a fun fact or a quote of the week and that week's special goes miles to keeping customers engaged. Do not just send specials in your email. Mix other pieces of content within the newsletter such as articles, facts, testimonials and stories which will increase your readership and open rates even when a customer isn't ready to purchase.

“By making your email content interesting and also promoting your corporate brand image within the email, it makes it easier for the user to remember your company.”

HOW TO GET PAST SPAM FILTERS

When sending out email, be careful that you follow best email practices so that you don't get caught in the spam filters. Some aspects that you should be aware of are:

- Your subject line
- Your mailing list
- Unsubscribe link in email

Subject Line

Make sure that the your subject line does not contain keywords that would automatically be flagged by filters such as “free”, “help”, “percent off”, or “reminder”. Although these keywords are not necessarily promotional in nature, having them in the subject line will create issues. Reduce the need for exclamation marks and also keep in mind that the ideal length for the subject line is 50 characters or less.

Mailing List

Make sure that your mailing list is clean and not obtained through fraudulent means. Your list is the most important part of an email campaign. If you have obtained email addresses for your email list without the permission of the owner, and you get a lot of requests to unsubscribe from your list, the value of your list goes down. Also, when an email from a certain email address is marked as spam, it is recorded by various IP hosts including email service providers and they could automatically blacklist you.

Unsubscribe link in the email

Make sure that each and every mass email you send out has a working unsubscribe link in it. Spam filters check for these links to make sure that readers have an option to not receive these types of emails. If there isn't any, it's automatically flagged as spam.

Third Party AutoResponders

It's a good idea to use third party auto-responder services as their reputation has been established through many years of service. What this means is that when you send an email through these mass email services, you have a higher chance of getting your message through

to the recipient as they are trusted by other email services providers and are not likely to get spammed.

Emails being sent by a third party provider can still look as if they are being sent from your company. You can add your email address in the 'From' field and receive replies back to your email. The difference is that you're using a third party server that has spent time following best email practices.



Online PR

Online PR is defined as creating positive mentions of your company or brand on third-party websites through online press releases, publicity campaigns, blogger relations, and viral marketing campaigns. It is tied closely with Search Engine Optimization as building awareness will also generate backlinks from other websites.

Online Press Releases: Online press releases are a great tactic to use in generating traffic to your site or awareness. Traditional press releases are created to convince journalists to feature you in their publication. One of the most important aspects of online press releases is related to Search Engine Optimization. Press releases are considered to be online content by search engines and they will pull up press releases on search results if they are relevant to the search query. This is why you should properly optimize your release as your target market could read your release on a PR site or on your own website. By posting your press releases on your site on a frequent basis, you can also get picked up search engines as valuable content.

As a business, building brand awareness is important. By publishing press releases, you are promoting your company and giving others the opportunity to link back to your site. When you're publishing something interesting and original, search engines and readers will be quick to link to your content and share it.

Blogger Relations: Other than traditional media, bloggers have become one of the most important sources for information. The most popular bloggers have an audience that rivals those of the most large media companies. By building a relationship with these bloggers (those that are relevant to your industry), you gain access to their readership that you normally won't be able to through mainstream media or advertising.



CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ONLINE PRESS RELEASE

An online press release should have a unique angle, something which will grab the attention of journalists from the thousands of releases that they receive from others. Remember that the purpose is to allow journalists to quickly scan the release for interesting information while still promoting your company.

TRACKING THE SUCCESS OF YOUR PRESS RELEASE

Even though you may have written an excellent press release and submitted to all the top PR services, don't expect the traffic to come in almost immediately. Some time may pass by before the release gets picked up. You should also make sure that you have targeted the right reporters within your industry. You must also be able to analyze if your release was a success or not.

One way you can measure the impact of your release is through using a free service called Google Alerts.

It allows you to be notified when a particular keyword or topic is published on the web. So, if you put in the title of your press release as your alert, Google will notify you as soon as the story is published. By using your press release heading as your Google Alert, there is a high chance that this will be your release when it appears.

4 ONLINE PRESS RELEASE TIPS

Have a great title - Remember that your online press release is being distributed through online platforms, so your release will have multiple end users – journalists, regular readers and search engines. When you write your headline, not only must it be engaging enough so that journalists and readers can be encouraged to read further, it also must include your keywords/phrases that will also attract the attention of search engines

The main point of the story must be in the first paragraph - Even more, your story should be described in the first two lines along with your keyword phrase. Get right to the point. The meat of the story should be in the first paragraph, grabbing the journalists' attention and providing him with the main points such as who, what, when, where, why and how.

Keep it short and get straight to the point - Make sure that all your paragraphs are simple, direct and not verbose. Each paragraph should be no more than 3 to 4 lines per paragraph. People don't read online, they quickly scan through text, so make sure that you've formatted the text to be easily scanned. Be ruthless. Get rid of any unnecessary text that doesn't help your story.

Create a call-to-action - Every press release should have two call-to-action phrases. Firstly, a section within the press release that the journalist can use for their articles. And secondly, create a call-to-action that provides more in-depth information for the journalist to download. This could be in a form of a full report on the subject matter being discussed in the release.

TRACKING MULTIPLE PRESS RELEASE DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

Let's say that you've submitted your release through multiple PR distribution services so that you can achieve the maximum amount of visibility for your release. To track its success, you need to know which service has proven to be the most valuable. You can compare the success of multiple press release distribution services in two ways:

Change a sentence - By changing a line slightly within the release for each distribution service you use, you can easily track the success of various releases. Just take each amended line and set up a Google Alert for them and keep track of which version is published more often.

“In the span of a few years, blogs have become an important source of information and even competition for readers against traditional media.”

Create different call-to-actions -By using different call-to-action in each press release, you will be able to track which distribution service gives you better visibility. For example, you can create various landing

pages for each distribution service, and track to see how many visits were received for each page.

FOLLOW UP WITH PUBLICATIONS

Once you see that a few publications are using your press release, start contacting them directly (especially the writers) to create a relationship with them, so that you can send your releases directly to them next time. By having a direct relationship, they will be more susceptible to publishing your release in the future. Also, you're

reducing your reliance on the press release sites, thereby saving you on the costs of distributing press releases.

Even though you are creating an online press release campaign, don't neglect your offline campaigns either. An online press release strategy should support your other PR tactics, however, you should realize that you get the added bonus of search engine optimization and a wider audience.

BLOGGER OUTREACH

In the span of a few years, blogs have become an important source of information and even competition for readers against traditional media. This has created a lot of opportunities for companies to expand online and get a wider reach than they normally could, especially for small businesses.

However, many businesses fail to take advantage of this, losing out from some free publicity that could help drive quality traffic. Here are some ways that can help you get visibility with bloggers:

Make it relevant. This is a simple rule but you'd be surprised as to how many people (including PR pros) forget it! Do your research on each blog as the more targeted your pitch is to the blog category, the better your chance is to get your pitch heard. Take a look at previous posts to see the style of writing, find out what topics are being covered regularly, and even ask the blog owner directly what kind of pitch they'd like to receive.

Send personalized communications. Just like journalists, bloggers get a lot of pitches and emails. So when they get a non-personalized email from someone who has clearly not bothered to do some research on the blogger or the blog, that email immediately goes to the trash. So when sending an initial email along with a press release, make a comment on the blogger's recent posts, be honest about who you are and explain why you're touching base. Also

be involved in the blog community by commenting on posts, including providing thoughtful insight that is of value and relevant to the blog post.

Make it easy to read and publish. Popular bloggers are very busy, so when they receive a press release or a pitch make it easy for them to copy and paste the relevant information into their post. Provide a summary of the press release in the email with a link to the full release. Most likely, they will take your summary, add their commentary, and post it.

Follow up. Even if a blogger doesn't post your story the first time, keep following up and building relationships. Once they get to know you, they will be more apt to considering your story.

Having said the above, if you're planning a large campaign which will involve hundreds of bloggers, media publications and such, tactics will change. One of the best ways to get the attention of a group of bloggers is through viral outreach.

THE VIRAL BLOG OUTREACH

A viral blog outreach is something that grabs the attention of a group of bloggers and pulls them in with great content. There is no pushing content to them, or forcing them to read your release. Here are some examples of a viral outreach campaign:

- Create web applications and ask for influential bloggers to test it for you and comment on their blogs
- Build a social media community around your product or company
- As a company, ask for the blogger's help in creating a new product or run a contest
- Create a dialogue between yourself and bloggers by discussing relevant issues within your industry.

When you want to go for large blogger relation campaigns, it's best to pull them in with great content or a tie-in. You can't send out hundreds of personalized pitches – it's time consuming and the results are going to be minimal to be of any consequence. What you have to do is create an idea or theme, some type of pull strategy - a web app, contest, or community - and seed it so that it will spread organically. Creating a viral outreach campaign is great for building long term relationships, which can be nurtured over time.

“Without a clear strategy, including outlining the metrics that will determine success, engaging in a social media campaign is doomed to fail.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

When it comes to social media, many small businesses think that creating a Twitter account and a Facebook page are enough for their social media campaign because everyone else is doing it. However, without a clear strategy, including outlining the metrics that will determine success, engaging in a social media campaign is doomed to fail. You would be working blind without knowing what is working and what is not.

For a marketing campaign to be successful it needs to be planned with clear guidelines and resources. It also needs to have measureable goals in order to evaluate the success of the campaign. Likewise, this is the same for a social media campaign. In making a social media strategy, you should ask yourself:

- Are you able to measure results? Do you know how to determine whether a media campaign is successful using metrics such as number of downloads or the number of comments left per post?

- Do you know where and how your clients interact online? When you identify who your target market is and where they interact online, it makes it easier to listen in on their conversations and join in.

Along with the answers to the questions above, you must also take these steps to create an effective social media marketing campaign:

- Research
- Organize
- Measure

RESEARCH

Before you start with any campaign, it is important that you spend the time to research your target market. Take the time to understand your prospect:

- Demographics
- Online presence
- Conversations they have
- Needs
- Complaints

With this information, it will be easier to devise a strategic plan that will provide you with a higher ROI.

DEVELOP YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Take advantage of the various tools out there to create your plan. With the data that you've obtained, take a minute to answer these questions:

What are your campaign objectives? Is it to grab their email addresses? Or do you want your prospects to purchase something

from your online store? Or do you want to reduce the number of calls to your call centre? Once you've created your goals and objectives, it's easier to start developing the content and tools required to achieve them.

What type of content will attract my prospects? What kind of information do your prospects want? Regular and frequent news around the world? Can it be an interactive contest? Or will it be a cool mini-game that they can try? Figure out how you can get them inspired and motivated enough to participate with your brand. Whatever the content is, make sure that it fits your prospects interests and needs and tie your brand around it.

How can you get your prospects to share the campaign with their friends? No social media campaign is successful unless it is shared between people. How can you make it easy for your target market to share the content? And most importantly, how can you measure the number of times your content was shared?

What are the technical resources you need to make it successful? In your plan, list every technical resource that you require in order for the campaign to succeed. Create a user workflow chart, mapping out how your prospect will interact with you through social media and what tools you need to facilitate that interaction.

MEASURING SUCCESS

As with any marketing campaign, you have to know the metrics in order to determine its success. What you should measure depends on what your objectives are for your social media campaign. For example, you can measure the percentage of change in a specific behaviour, or the number of comments made, or the reduction of customer service calls. All of these can be measured easily with the right tools. There are a number of basic metrics that you can use in your social media campaigns:

Total subscribers: How many people want to know more about your brand? How many have subscribed to your Facebook page, or signed up for your newsletter and RSS feeds?

Participation rate: The participation rate determines how active your users are in your social media campaigns. Do they actively comment or create content? Or do they just passively sit there and do nothing?

How many times is your content shared: An important metric in which you will determine how often your content is shared between people through various services such as Digg, Facebook, or Twitter.

How much traffic did you receive from it: Bottom line – did your campaign drive traffic and sales to your site?

Every social media campaign requires metrics and a reporting tool to determine whether you have met your business objectives. It becomes easy to add a monetary value to actions that are subjective in nature. For example, how much is the value of a blog post to your company if it drives traffic to your online store? Knowing these values would make it easier to calculate your ROI from the social media campaign.

One thing that you have to keep in mind – social media is not about one time campaigns, but about using the social web to build relationships. These relationships support your business objectives in the long term and do not end after one campaign. Remember that an effective social media marketing strategy builds on momentum from multiple interactions, word of mouth and viral growth. A social media community requires nurturing over time for it to be effective and a social media campaign plays a small part in the larger social media strategy.



Conclusion

The web has become so prevalent in our lives that millions of people use it every day for information research, online shopping, international news, entertainment and connecting with others. Because of its massive reach, marketing your business online can increase awareness, grow your customer base and, ultimately, add to your bottom line.

To reach your prospects and convert them into customers, you must be able to plan the online marketing strategy for your website. By using the tactics outlined in this ebook, you can find ways to generate new traffic, get more conversions, and build a strong brand. If you ignore the potential of the internet as a marketing channel, you are providing your competitors with the opportunity to steal your market share.

Positioning your brand on the web is the key to success for any small business and, with the help of targeted traffic from search engines, you can capture more clients at a fraction of the cost. And now, with social media becoming an important part of branding, it has proved that the internet is extremely effective for promoting smaller businesses.

The underlying reason for any small business is to drive profits and growth through sales and capturing new customers. Online marketing is one of the most effective ways to achieve this goal and bring success to your business.



Tools & Resources

KEYWORD RESEARCH

Google AdWord Tools
Keywords Spy
Google Keyword Tool
Google Insight for Search
Google Trends
GoodKeywords.com
SEMRush
KeywordDiscovery.com
KGen
Wordpot
NicheBot Classic
Synonyms
Thesaurus
Delicious
WordTracker Labs

EMAIL MARKETING

Aweber
iContact
Cakemail
Mailchimp

MEASUREMENT

Google Analytics
Google Website Optimizer
Hubspot
Compete.com
Quantcast
Woopra
Raven SEO Tools
Popuri.us
Yahoo Site Explorer
Alexa

TURNKEY WEBSITES/BLOGS

Wordpress
Squarespace
Weebly
Google Page Creator
SiteKreator
Yola
ExpressionEngine
SnapPages
LightCMS



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