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Make Sure Your Company is Visible on Google with Search Engine Optimization

Your Guide to Lead Generation in Tough Economic Times

WSI White Paper

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Search Engine Optimization: Make Sure Your Company is Visible on Google

Introduction

How many times have you typed keywords that are related to your products or services into Google and saw your competitors' names instead of yours?

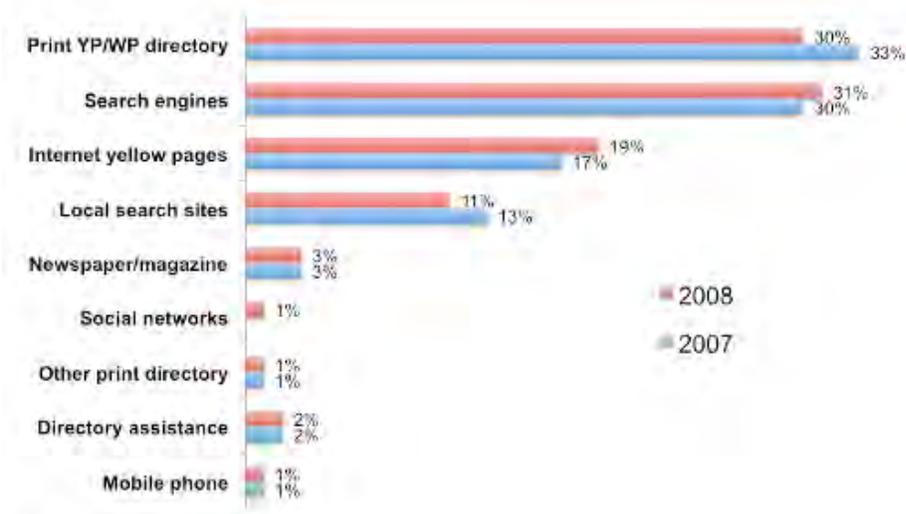
Many business owners have heard of the successes that others have had using the Internet as a lead generation marketing tool. But some of us are not sure how to approach Internet marketing as an integral part of our business. We continually hear about social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. We know that companies promote themselves on sites like Twitter and on television and radio, but how do we know that this will work for us.

This whitepaper examines how a company should approach Search Engine Marketing and Social Media Marketing as part of their marketing strategy.

Market Drivers

The Yellow Pages Vs Search Engines

This graph from webpro news (Australia) shows that search engines have finally passed the Yellow Pages with regards to finding products and services.



Search engines can be more effective than Yellow Pages because:

- Your Yellow Pages ad can appear next to your competitor
- With an optimized website you can differentiate yourself from competitors
- It is difficult to determine what business came from your Yellow Pages ads
- Using analytics you are able to track how visitors interact with your website
- With Content Marketing your website will become an asset to your business

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Search Engine Marketing

Search Engine Marketing (SEM) generally covers two areas: Paid Search Advertising and Organic Search Optimization.

Google Pay-Per-Click (PPC) is the most popular or well known method of advertising your products and services on the Internet. Even though PPC is one of the best forms of advertising, like all advertising, your exposure stops when your budget runs out.

With organic search, once you achieve a page one Google ranking you will begin to receive up to 75% more visitors to your website than with traditional Google PPC. So how does one go about achieving these often elusive rankings? Once you know the secret to obtaining search engine visibility, you will be motivated to participate in the process of developing your online brand.

Search Engine Visibility

Search engine visibility means getting your company's name and brand to appear on search engine results pages for many keywords that are related to your product or service. So how does one go about achieving this? Why do people use search engines today?

Analysing the Enviro and MarketingSherpa B2B Report 2009 identified that only 10% of people go to a search engine like Google, type in a keyword and then click through to a Web page and buy a product, all on the same day.

The rest of us go to the Internet to get information and do research on the product or service we are interested in.

What Information Do We Look For?

The study revealed that people who use search engines are looking for the following information in order of importance:

- Easily found prices
- Download info
- Product info
- Product comparisons
- Your company's approach to business
- Technical papers
- Knowledge base
- General information about your product
- White papers
- Case studies

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- Multimedia like video on your product
- Information about your company
- Webinars
- Podcasts

From this list it is easy to see what the “secret” is.

It is “CONTENT”. I am sure you’ve all heard of the phrase “*content is king*”. Well since the inception of the Internet, content is what we have all been looking for. It has stood the test of time, while many of us try to keep up with Google’s ever changing algorithms.

Once we find out that content is all we need to achieve search engine visibility, we see many business owners get excited about participating in their website marketing with great results.

The best way to get a return on your website investment is to create an asset out of your website. This is achieved by adding content to your website on a regular basis. This strategy is called “Content Marketing”. By adding content pages you increase your chances of ranking for “long tail” keyword phrases. These are phrases of 3 or more words that often result in highly focused and targeted search results.

Compete Effectively Against Bigger Brands with SEO

One of the greatest advantages the Internet has over the Yellow Pages is that the Yellow Pages puts your business right next to your competitors, whereas the Internet gives you infinite scope to differentiate yourself from competitors. In addition to this, the various analytical tools available to website owners allows for you to identify areas where you can make an improvement to your website.

I Have Good Content But I Still Don’t Rank on Google’s First Page, Why?

This is a question that is asked many times. The way Google prioritizes its search rankings is done in two ways:

1. **On-page optimization** – at the very basic level, it is where the good content comes in with the related keywords being used in headings, sub headings, bullets and internal link text.
2. **Off-page optimization** – These are external links that point to your website from other websites. These links are seen as recommendations and build credibility for your website. Google ranks your web page based on the number of valuable related links. You could view this as a voting system; the one with the most related votes will do well.

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So Where Do We Get Valuable Links From?

Other websites will link to your website if you have good content that they wish to refer to. In this case your website will acquire links without much intervention from you.

Many webmasters soon realized that external links would get their website ranked well and that is when they started to use techniques that are seen or termed as “Black Hat SEO”. A term used when one engages in activities that try to manipulate the search engine rankings.

The objective with link building is to get links back to your website using your “product keyword” or variable thereof in the link text. This is seen as a valuable link and not easily manipulated.

Links can be created by the following link building strategies:

- Blog posts that promote, discuss or compare products
- Article marketing – where one writes product related articles and submits to “Article websites” where webmasters can use your article on their websites. The rule is that they cannot change your content and must leave the authors signature where links are pointed back to your website.
- Reciprocal links from other industry related websites. Where webmasters agree to swap links with one other using requested “valuable” link text.

Where Does Social Media Marketing Fit In?

Social Media could mean many things to us especially if one is not familiar with the term. Social media could be looked at in the following categories:

- **Social media advertising** – using paid text or banner ads on sites like Facebook. These ads allow you to target your market based on their demographics
- **Social media book marking** – Sites like “Digg” and “Stumbleupon” provide users with the ability to tag websites that they like or recommend. Social Book marking supports your search engine linking strategy
- **Social media optimization** – upload your videos to Youtube and optimize them using product related keywords and you stand the chance of getting on Google’s first page for your related keywords. By posting optimized content on websites like “Craigslist” & “Yahoo Answers” one can get ranked for related keywords in a short space of time.
- **Social media networking** – many business owners attend regular networking meetings where the objective is to meet other business owners with the objective of doing business with each other. Social media websites like “LinkedIn” provide professionals with a way to establish relationships online where one can build credibility and introduce their products and services in an educational manner.

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Why is Social Media Marketing Important?

Up until now we've heard that *"content is king"*. This is even more important as one can now place your content on many social media sites as well.

Content Marketing now moves to video, slideshows, blogs and networking sites like LinkedIn and Facebook. So many more places for people to find your company and brand.

But with the popularity of Social media networking sites, like forums, Facebook and LinkedIn, we find out that not only is content king, but *"conversation is king"*. People like to ask others for recommendations and experiences with products and services. What people say about your product, service or company can mean all the difference to closing a lead or losing the business.

Generating Leads Online

Lead generation for most businesses is possible on the Internet. You will be surprised what good relevant content can do for website visibility and lead generation. You will be seen as a resource website and this builds credibility which in turn creates confidence for the visitor to engage with your company.

The Solution

The solution is to think creatively about the types of content you should upload to your website. One of the best ways to come up with content ideas is to do some research and identify other keywords that would help you with writing relevant content.

This is where Search Engine Optimization comes into its own. It is used to increase your website's search engine rankings so users can find your products or services easily.

With the addition of Social Media Optimization you can dramatically increase the number of search engine rankings you list in, which in turn will drive more targeted traffic to your website.

Generic Solution

By taking full advantage of Search Engine and Social Media Optimization you are able to reinforce your website or brand presence on popular search engines without paying extra for it. Here are some steps you can take to optimize your website organically:

- **Content Marketing.** A resource website should have articles related to the product or service that you are offering. Websites that contain 100 pages of content or more are likely to achieve higher rankings in search engines and increase your website's ability to be found for long-tail keyword searches.
- **Create Incoming Links.** Link building and link popularity is important for all websites. Link popularity refers to the amount of text links that lead to your website from other sites and is

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the single most important factor that a search engine algorithm considers when ranking a web page. Effective link building is achieved by blogging on a regular basis, submitting your websites to online classifieds/directories and by taking advantage of the many social media platforms that are available – Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.

Combine SEO with SMO. Brand your name with social media marketing. Websites like Facebook, YouTube, MySpace and Twitter can be leveraged effectively to grow your business. By spreading your content over social media channels your website will gain many more search engine positions.

Work With WSI to Make Sure You Appear on Google

Developing a search engine optimization game plan is the key to the success of your website. It takes careful keyword research which is an activity that can take many hours followed by carefully sorting them into specific product or service silos to ensure creating relevant content that will attract targeted “long tail” searches.

Let WSI help you by creating the optimal website content blueprint to ensure a successful “lead generating” website. With our proprietary WSI Power Search software, we can quickly identify and obtain creative content ideas that will develop your website into a resource website that will establish your credibility as an expert in your industry. Let WSI become your Internet marketing lead generation partner.

About the Author



Francois Muscat is a recognized Internet and Search Marketing Expert who has worked in this industry for the past 6 years. He is a sought after speaker at Internet marketing conferences and has presented at numerous International seminars. He recently won best presenter at WSI’s international convention in Stansted, England.

If you have any questions, please email education@wsicorprate.com.