

SEO & Internet Marketing 101

An SEO / Online Marketing Tutorial for Those New to Internet Marketing



by

New Media Words

<http://NewMediaWords.biz>

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About New Media Words



New Media Words is an SEO writing and distribution firm.

The company was founded in 2007 by Yuwanda Black. Initially, it was a simple SEO writing company, providing one service – SEO content writing (primarily keyword-rich articles).

We excelled at SEO writing so proficiently that clients began requesting other services like blog posting, meta tag writing and press releases.

In order to fully assist clients with their growing SEO and internet marketing needs, in 2008, we expanded into a full-service SEO Writing and Distribution Firm (online at

<http://NewMediaWords.biz>).

About the Founder

Yuwanda Black is a SEO Content Specialist. She has been a freelance writer since 1993. Her clients run the gamut – from internet marketing and web design firms, to advertising agencies, online entrepreneurs and small to medium-sized businesses.

Yuwanda personally oversees each New Media Words project. She advises clients on internet marketing strategies, recruits qualified SEO talent, outsources projects and conducts quality checks. And oh yeah, she writes SEO content as well!

Ms. Black says, *“By completely handling my clients’ SEO writing and internet marketing needs, they can focus on what they do best. That’s why New Media Words has been so successful.”*

Ms. Black has been in the publishing industry since 1987. She owned Inkwell Editorial, an editorial staffing agency in New York City, from 1996-2004. She repositioned the business as an online information portal for freelance writers in December 2004.

In 2000, Yuwanda wrote and developed a popular Chicago-style copyediting course, attended by Fortune 500 executives and junior execs alike. She also developed and taught a web development and marketing course at Borough of Manhattan Community College in 2001.

To date, Yuwanda has published 15 e-books and e-reports, and two freelance writing e-courses (one on SEO; one general). She has written a few thousand articles on everything from search engine optimization (SEO) to small business marketing to freelance writing.

Yuwanda holds an AA in English; a BA in Sociology; and completed one year of course study towards an MA in Criminal Justice (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, NYC).

Learn more about Ms. Black at <http://www.linkedin.com/in/yuwanda>.

PREFACE

I'm going to speak mostly in the first person throughout because SEO and internet marketing is all about communication. To get the communicating I'm about to embark on with you right, I don't want there to be any barriers (eg, second person voice) between what I'm going to attempt to explain.

The reason I decided to write this tutorial is that I field a lot of questions from clients about SEO (search engine optimization), SEM (search engine marketing) and internet marketing in general.

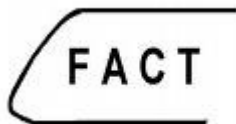
As SEO and SEM are emerging strategies, many clients are very confused by them. This makes it hard for them to decide which service(s) to order. They know they need to get involved in this whole "SEO thing," as quite a few have put it. BUT, which toe to stick in the internet marketing waters first is where the confusion begins.

For example, some commonly asked questions from new clients are: how will SEO articles drive traffic to my site? Should I go with the article submission service? How does that work? What's the difference between a press release and an SEO article? What about the duplicate content penalty? Will it get my site banned? And on and on and on.

Once clients gain a clear understanding of SEO, it makes it much easier for them to choose the best service(s) for their company.

To that end, this tutorial will walk you through the basics of what SEO is all about. It will also give you an idea of which services I think you should start with if you're new to the SEO and internet marketing game.

In doing this, I will go over some short- and long-term SEO strategies – always keeping cost in mind. All of this is designed to help you put together an effective SEO and internet marketing plan for your business.



SEO & Internet Marketing Fact: One thing I want to make very clear is this: **SEO and internet marketing is not a one-hit wonder.**

Like any type of marketing – especially if you don't have a whole bunch of money to throw at it – it takes time to see results. But if you do it consistently, it can pay huge dividends now, and well into the future.

Where many drop the ball is with consistency – as in, they don't formulate a plan and stick with it. They think that results are going to happen fast and come easy. Unfortunately, it's just not that simple. Again, unless you have a pile of cash to throw at your internet marketing initiatives, you should be looking for "*progressive wins*" as we call them at New Media Words.

What are progressive wins? This is the progress you can chart month after month and year after year.

Note: This is written for small- to mid-sized firms with limited online marketing budgets, or those who just want to start driving organic traffic to their sites.

What is organic traffic? It's defined below.

Common Internet Marketing Abbreviations & Terms

Just so we're on the same page, following are a few common abbreviations and terms you'll come across when SEO and internet marketing is discussed.

SEO: Search Engine Optimization

SEM: Search Engine Marketing

PPC: Pay Per Click

ROI: Return on Investment

PLR: Private Label Rights: Refers to content/articles sold to more than one party.

Organic Traffic: Organic traffic is, in essence, "free traffic;" it's any traffic that comes to your site that you didn't pay for, (eg, pay per click ads).

What is Search Engine Optimization?

To understand search engine optimization, you must understand how search engines work. Forgive me if this sounds very elementary, but so as not to confuse anyone, I want to start from ground zero, so to speak.

What is a Search Engine?

The best way to describe a search engine is as the *Yellow Pages* of the internet. They index every site on the web. The internet is dominated by three major search engines: Google.com (by far the most popular), Yahoo.com and MSN.com (a Microsoft property).

If you want to find a business on the internet, instead of pulling out a big, thick yellow book, you log onto your favorite search engine and start typing.

How Search Engines Work

Search engines work to locate information for web surfers. When you want to find something on the web, you go to your favorite search engine and type in some words. In SEO speak, these are known as keyword phrases. Two types of results pop up: organic results and paid results, illustrated below.

The screenshot shows a Google search results page for the query "herbal supplements". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "Web", "Images", "Video", "News", "Maps", "Gmail", and "more". The Google logo is on the left, and the search input field contains "herbal supplements" with a "Search" button and links for "Advanced Search" and "Preferences". Below the search bar, it says "Web" and "Results 1 - 10 of about 772,000 for herbal supplements (0.09 seconds)".

The results are divided into two main sections:

- Sponsored Search:** This section is highlighted in yellow. It includes a "Sponsored Link" for "Herbal Supplements" from www.veria.com, and a "Sponsored Links" column on the right with several ads: "Herbalife-Formula 1 Shake" (15% Discount & Free Shipping), "Kordial Nutrients" (Professional Grade Supplements), "Nutritional Supplements" (Dedicated to bringing you high quality nutritional supplements), "Herbal Supplements 30%Off" (Compare quality only top brands), and "100% Natural Supplements" (No GMOs or Synthetics).
- Organic Search:** This section is highlighted in blue. It lists several organic search results with titles, snippets, and URLs. The results include: "Herbal Supplements Guide" (www.herbal-supplements-guide.com), "Herbal supplements: What to know before you buy - MayoClinic.com" (www.mayoclinic.com/health/herbal-supplements/SA00044), "MedlinePlus: Drugs & Supplements" (www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginform), "Natural Health Herbal, Vitamin and Nutritional Supplements ..." (www.nutrasanus.com), "Herbal Supplements: Consider Safety, Too [NCCAM Health Information]" (nccam.nih.gov/health/supplement-safety/), and "Natural Herbs, Herbal Remedies, Herbal Medicine and Supplements ...".

The results that pop up are what the search engine in question thinks are the most relevant – of the billions of web pages on the internet – to what you're looking for.

As a business, you want to be as high up in **organic** search results as possible because **most web surfers don't look past the first three pages of results returned**, according to an April 2008 survey reported by eMarketer.com, an industry leading analyzer and researcher of online and digital media businesses.

The survey found that:

Nearly seven out of 10 respondents said they clicked a search result within the first page of results, and 92% clicked a result within the first three pages of search results. . . . fewer search engine users surveyed were willing to click results past the third page” [Source: eMarketer.com, *Searching for SEO: Searchers prefer organic results*]

So, how do you get on the first few pages of results? This is where SEO gets interesting.

All most internet users know about search engines is how to find stuff using them. But, if you're going to start pouring money into marketing on the web, then you must go a step further and learn how search engines operate. Specifically, how they find and rank sites.

How Search Engines Find and Rank Sites

Search engines find and rank sites by using what's known as spiders or robots (aka bots). They troll the web, cataloguing sites as they find them. HOW they catalogue sites is key to ranking well. This is known as search engine optimization.

Let's say you have an offline store that sells antique dolls. A (keyword) phrase you'd probably want to rank well for is "antique dolls". If someone types in that phrase, you'd want to be on the first few pages of results, that way they'd click through to your site and buy something.

So how do you get there? How do you get on the first few pages of results? Well, by helping the spiders/bots categorize your site properly. IE, by having a website that is search engine friendly.

This means having it properly "optimized." It's like going to the video store to rent a DVD. If you want a horror flick, you'd go to the horror section, NOT the romance section. You do certain behind-the-scenes things (ie, optimize your site) to help search engine spiders put your site in the right category.

What are these behind-the-scenes things?

Read on.



How to Make Your Site Search Engine Friendly

Following are four things you can do to make your site search-engine friendly.

I) Fill It With Keyword Rich Text: A search engine friendly website should be filled with keyword-rich text. What are keywords?

Keywords are the words/phrases web surfers type in to find stuff on the internet. Having content on your site with relevant keywords sprinkled throughout will help search engine spiders discern what the site is all about – and return it in search results.

This is usually accomplished via SEO articles, which can be about anything you want. The more content (eg, SEO articles) you have on your site, the better.

The key to success with keywords is to use actual words and phrases that real web surfers type into search engines.

This is what keyword discovery and keyword analysis is all about. Once you find out what these popular phrases are, then you can write (or hire an SEO copywriter to write) keyword-rich articles.

SEO copywriters know how to use the right keyword density, how to write attention-grabbing headlines; and where to place keywords in text so that search engines rank a particular page high in search results. These are just some of the reasons SEO copywriting is a highly valued skill.

Learn more about New Media Words' SEO copywriting services at:
<http://www.newmediawords.biz/seo-copywriting.htm>.

II) Get Backlinks: Backlinks are probably the single most important thing you can do to make your site more search engine friendly, after adding keyword rich content. What are backlinks?

Backlinks are simply links back to your website. They are also known as inbound links. And, the reason they are so important is that search engines like them.

A very important note about backlinks: You want one-way backlinks, not reciprocal links. What's the difference? One-way backlinks are sites that link back to yours. Reciprocal links are where you trade links with another site (eg, you link to my site and I'll link to yours).

Search engines rank sites with lots of one-way backlinks higher than those with reciprocal links because they are seen as more of an authority site. Think about it this way, if a site has a lot of one-way backlinks, that means a lot of people find the information on that site relevant enough that they link to it (ie, share it), without any return favor.

A site with a lot of reciprocal links ranks lower because it's kind of like a conspiracy, eg, you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours. Which site would you trust more – the one that everybody recommends even though they get nothing out of it, or one that has a lot of reciprocal links?

How do you get backlinks? Article marketing is a very effective strategy, for it spreads your content far and wide on the web. By allowing others to publish your content on their site, in their newsletter, on their blog, in forums, etc., you earn a backlink every time the link appears.

Social media marketing is another way. This is interacting on sites like Twitter, MySpace and Facebook. One article on your site or post on your blog that goes viral can bring in thousands of visitors.

What is “going viral”, ie, viral marketing?

It is content/video that spreads like wildfire across the net.

A more official definition is “any marketing technique that encourages web users to pass along an advertiser’s message.” This creates the potential for explosive visibility. One of the most outrageously successful examples of viral marketing is Hotmail, which spreads its message with every email sent out.

To learn more about article marketing and backlinks, visit <http://www.newmediawords.biz/article-submission.htm>.

To learn more about social media marketing, visit <http://www.newmediawords.biz/social-media-marketing.htm>

Note: We’ll talk more about article marketing later.

III) Keep Things Like Flash & Images to a Minimum: Search engine spiders like text, for it gives them the information they need to do their job. Without getting too technical, a website with things like Flash and a lot of images makes it very hard for spiders to judge what a site is about.

If you happen to have a site like this, at the very least name the images using keyword-rich words and phrases. For example, instead of naming an image photo1.jpg, name it mustang-auto-parts1.jpg (if you have a site that sells mustang auto parts, for example). This way, when search engine spiders crawl your site, they’ll have some real, descriptive text to grab on to.

Also, block as much text together as you can. This way, search engines can at least get an idea of what your site is about.

A note about flash and other web imagery: Unless your site caters to an industry where this is important, leave it out. When most people surf the web, they want INFORMATION. And, they want it as quickly as possible. So while Flash may make your site look cutting edge, it could be losing you business because many surfers will simply click away.

IV) Write Your Meta Tags: The three most important meta tags according to many internet marketing experts are the Title, Description and Keyword tags.

The **title tag** is arguably the most important meta tag, for it tells search engine spiders what a specific page on a website is all about. It is the description that is displayed in your web browser’s window at the very top of the page (that white writing that appears across the top).

Many companies make the mistake of having the same title tag on every page of their site. This is not helpful to search engines. Each page on your site should be treated as its own separate entity; hence, it should have its own unique title. This is especially true if you carry many different

products across many different categories.

Your title tag should contain some of your high-traffic keyword phrases and should explain exactly what the surfer can expect to find on that particular page (as opposed to your entire site).

Many site owners will begin their title tag with their company name. This means diddly squat to search engines. Your title tag should start with a high-traffic keyword that describes what the web surfer will find on that page. Access any page of <http://NewMediaWords.biz> to see what I mean.

The **description tag** is what surfers read when your site pops up in organic search results. It helps them decide whether or not to even click on your site, so you definitely want this tag to be present – and accurate.

The **keyword tag** is a thorough list of words and phrases that best describe your site. They should be directly relevant to the specific page at hand. They can also contain keywords that are relevant to your site as a whole.

While many don't put a lot of stock in meta tags, they should be written for every page on your site – if for no other reason than they give search engine spiders more information about your site. This makes it easier for them to properly categorize it.

Learn more about New Media Words' meta tag writing service at:
<http://www.newmediawords.biz/meta-tag-writing.htm>.

Conclusion

There's much more to search engine optimization, of course, but this should be enough to give you a fundamental understanding of how online traffic is generated and how you can rank high. WHICH, by the way, is getting harder every day. Proof?



Experts estimate that as many as 100,000 new websites go live every day. The following backs this assertion up.

According to Netcraft.com: **The November 2008 survey [of Web Server stats] shows worldwide monthly growth of nearly three million websites, with responses now being received from a total of 185,167,897 sites.**

[Source: <http://news.netcraft.com/archives/2008/11/index.html>].

Considering this, how in the world will you get found online?

Via a sustained online marketing effort – that's how.

Frequently Asked Questions about Internet Marketing

Following are some questions I've fielded from clients new to internet marketing.

What's the difference between a blog post and an SEO article?

A blog post is shorter than an SEO article. Blog posts are 50-300 words usually. Most fall in the 200-300-word range.

SEO articles are usually 250-500 or 600 words. Most are in the 350-400 word range. They can be much longer, but you'll usually be charged a higher rate for articles longer than 400 words.

Blog posts and SEO articles are written with certain keyword phrases in mind. Sometimes, an SEO article will have more than one keyword phrase (which again, costs more). Blog posts rarely have more than one keyword phrase, because they're so short.

Why are SEO articles more expensive than blog posts?

Because they're longer, hence take longer to write.

What's the difference between an SEO article and a press release?

Many confuse press releases with other types of content (eg, SEO articles/web content) because they are about the same length 350-400 words, more or less. However, press releases are a different animal altogether. They are a highly targeted advertising medium that require research and must be written in a certain journalistic style.

About Press Releases: The whole purpose of a press release is to attract the attention of the media. Companies use them to get interviews in newspapers, on TV and in other types of mainstream media.

Since the purpose of writing a press release is to attract the media, they must be written with a particular slant in mind. For example, a writer would look at what's hot in the news at any given moment and try to tie your company's product/service in to that so that journalists will be more likely to pick up your story.

Remember, journalists don't care about your product, service, company, etc. What they care about is how it will help/appeal to their readers and viewers. So, if your company sells a wood floor cleaner, you wouldn't write a press release discussing the features of the wood cleaner (eg, how it's better than other products, the fact that it's cheaper, etc.).

You'd have a better chance of getting picked up by the media if your press release was written with a "green" slant in mind, for example. Green (eg, environmentally safe) topics are hot in the news right now.

So if you wrote a press release discussing how your company's wood floor cleaner is made from 100% natural ingredients, which makes it ideal for families because it keeps your pets, kids and the environment safe, then it's a "newsworthy" item.

A good press release will throw in a statistic or two from noted organizations, hence they require research. Press releases also must be formatted a certain way, or they will stand out as unprofessional, making it unlikely to get noticed by the media.

About SEO Articles: SEO articles, on the other hand, are just simple web copy written with a keyword phrase in mind. Again, they are usually 350-400 words long, and require no particular format. They are not written with journalists in mind (although well-written SEO articles covering “hot” topics could very well garner media attention).

What’s the difference between a press release and a company announcement?

Many confuse press releases with company announcements. Company announcements are those short notices posted on a business website in the “Media” section. They may announce a new hire, a product launch, an award the company received, etc.

Technically, these are not press releases; they are company announcements. But, most refer to them as press releases. While company announcements make your company look more professional, most journalists have no interest in them – unless you’re a large, well-known company (eg, Google, Microsoft, etc.).

They do make your company look more professional though, so by all means add them to your site if you wish.

Do you place press releases for clients?

We place press releases on PRLog.com for clients. It’s a free press release distribution service. We don’t actively shop your release to media outlets. That’s what a PR consultant/firm does. And, that’s why they cost a mint.

A note about free press release distribution: We write press releases with SEO in mind. Why? Because, much like any other online content, once it’s live (eg, on PRLog.com), it will get picked up by search engines and become a part of the web for years.

So while we don’t “place” press releases, you do get search engine marketing bang for your buck because we always keep SEO in mind.

What is an article directory?

An article directory is a website that allows you to submit content for free. The purpose of article directories is to get backlinks, which increases traffic (and sales).

You submit articles to article directories in hopes that they will get picked up and published by others (newsletter publishers, other websites, blogs, etc.). You grant these publishers the right to reprint your content – FREE – as long as your resource box (explained below) remains intact.

EzineArticles.com is the #1 article directory on the web. There are literally thousands of them though. All have many categories for you to submit your content to. Log on to <http://EzineArticles.com> to get a feel for what article directories are all about.

What is a resource box?

A resource box is a few lines of text that authors put at the end of articles they submit to article directories. The whole purpose of a resource box is to get backlinks. This link is usually one that goes back to the author's website.

The resource box is the main reason you write and distribute articles via article directories. There's an art to writing them so that they're effective. If you don't know how to write your resource box, article marketing can be a complete waste of time.

Click on any article in <http://EzineArticles.com> and look at the end of it to see the resource box.

What is article directory submission?

Quite simply, writing articles and distributing them via article directories like EzineArticles.com.

You have to create an account with each directory to submit articles to them. Each article directory has its own set of rules (eg, article length, where links in articles can appear, whether or not links in articles can appear, keyword density, etc.).

While tedious, article marketing (eg, submitting articles to article directories) is one of the most effective, low-cost methods of online advertising that exists.

We use ArticleMarketer.com to automate the article directory submission process. Learn more about that here: <http://newmediawords.biz/article-submission1.htm>.

Should I register a domain name for my company blog, or is using a free service like blogger ok?

It is my professional opinion that every company should stay away from free blogging platforms and register their own domain name.

In most cases, if you have a website, you can simply add your blog to it. Eg, if your company is ABCCompany.com, your company's blog could be at ABCCompany.com/blog. Why should you go this route? Two reasons: image and cost.

Free blogging platforms don't give your company the right image. It pegs you as unprofessional. With competition on the web being as stiff as it is, you need every competitive edge you can get. This is an easy one to take advantage of.

As for cost, at some point, if you start with a free blogging platform, you're going to have to move it to your company site. It happens to every serious business (trust me, I know). And, it can be a paid in the patootie to move from one platform to another.

It can cause you to lose PR rank in search engines (for what that's worth), and is just an all-around hassle. If you have the foresight to start out the right way, ie on your own domain, you will be so glad you did down the road.

Darren Rowse at Probblogger.net, the foremost site on the web for all things blogging, addresses this point in his post, *Choosing a Blog Platform*. He writes:

One of the issues of starting out with a hosted [free] platform is that if there comes a day when you want to go with a standalone one that you have some work cut out for you in retaining any traffic that you've built up. . . . there are implications of changing domains later in terms of taking regular readers with you, having to climb the search engine rankings all over again and redirecting traffic from one blog to another.

[Source: <http://www.probblogger.net/archives/2006/02/15/choosing-a-blog-platform/>]

Read the entire post to gain better insight before making a final decision.

I've heard about something called the duplicate content penalty? What is it?

This is among the top concerns of many who are new to internet marketing. Understanding what it is and how it works will ease any fears you may have in this area.

When a search engine finds the same content on many sites (ie, duplicate content), it excludes the links from duplicates. Hence, the duplicate content penalty is really not a penalty at all; it's an exclusionary mechanism to keep 100 sites with identical content from popping up in search results.

To explain a bit further, search engines work to provide as many **different, relevant** results as possible to web surfers. They do this by choosing from among the **top sites** that have the most relevant content.

How they choose which site with identical content to show results from is what should concern you. And, this is what SEO is all about.

Sites with more relevant backlinks, more keyword rich articles, with well-written meta tags and good site navigation all have a better chance of having their content shown than one that doesn't have this type of SEO done.

Will article marketing trigger the duplicate content penalty?

No. And remember, the duplicate content penalty is not a penalty, but an **exclusionary tactic** used to return the best results to web surfers.

What happens is, when you distribute articles via a service like ArticleMarketer, the duplicate content filter spots this content and may exclude the links pointing to your website from results. Some of the links will continue to count though – just on the most relevant, highly ranked sites – not all sites.

Furthermore, many of the links from articles you distribute will still count from many different sites in some search engines. This helps your backlinking strategy.

Article Marketing Tip: One thing I do not recommend is posting articles that are written for mass distribution on your site. Your website should be filled with unique content if possible. This is why

we offer two types of articles at New Media Words: (i) “easy, breezy” content; and (ii) foundational content.

Easy, breezy articles are meant for mass distribution (eg, article directories, ArticleMarketer, etc.) Foundational content is meant to be posted only on your website. This is discussed in more detail later.

Which SEO/Internet marketing service(s) should I order first?

This question – more than any other – is what prompted me to write this tutorial. That’s because it depends on so many factors. There are criteria though that you can use to determine which service we offer that would be best for your company.

FYI, a little later on, I do offer advice on a one-size-fits-all beginner marketing strategy. But ultimately, you determine what’s right for your business.

This question gets to the meat of this tutorial, so read on.

Which SEO & Internet Marketing Service You Should Start With?

In order to determine which SEO and/or internet marketing service you should start with, ask yourself the following questions. Then, go to our menu of offerings and see which one fits those objectives.

3 Questions That Help You Clarify Your Internet Marketing Strategy

I. What are your short-term goals? Many clients answer this by saying, “To get more traffic.” Of course, that’s the overriding goal of any internet marketing campaign. But, you have to be more specific than that because the ultimate goal is not to increase traffic – but to increase sales.

So, quantify your goals. For example, we want to start getting 5-10 new leads a week from our website. Or, we want to increase sales by 15% in the next six months.

When you have concrete goals in mind, it helps you to crystallize what you need to do to get there.

II. What are your long-term goals? After many clients reach short-term goals, they then start to realize the power of SEO and internet marketing, and how quickly they can grow sales over the long-term. It’s at this point that they become more vested in the process.

Many times, they will start to shift portions of their offline marketing budgets to internet marketing because you can get more for your buck – and quicker too.

III. What is your budget? The reason this is important is that you don’t want to choose methods you can’t afford to repeat.

As a business person, I’m sure you know that marketing is about consistency. Conventional marketing wisdom is that you have to “touch” a prospect 7 to 28 times, depending on which source you read, before they will buy from you.

The first seven times a prospect sees an ad, experts say, it only *begins* to sink in. They have to see it many more times before it reinforces the brand and makes the sale. Hence, if you run a PPC campaign, but can only afford to do it for a week or a month, it’s probably going to be a waste of your money.

You might be better off with an article marketing campaign. This is one reason I always advise clients to use free and low-cost methods. That way, you’ll always be able to market – no matter what your ad budget looks like.

Commit to SEO and the Internet Marketing Process

The main thing you need to succeed in online marketing is a commitment to the process. Online marketing works. Some techniques work better than others, some work faster than others.

What works though depends on your niche, your goals, your budget – and your commitment to hang in there until you find a winning strategy. And this constantly changes. That’s what makes SEO so exciting – and so frustrating at the same time.

One sure way to fail in online marketing is to not be in the game.

If you're not harnessing the power of the internet for your business, you're missing out on short-term income goals and long-term gains. In fact, over the long haul, you could literally be killing your business. How/why?

If you're not marketing online, you can bet your competition is.

In 3, 5 or 10 years, where do you think your business will be compared to the competition if they've consistently invested in online marketing – and you haven't?

With that being said, following is an internet marketing strategy that I've found to be successful for almost all businesses – no matter their niche or their budget.

A Shoestring Internet Marketing Campaign that Works for Every Business

Note: The following is strictly from my point of view. I've been a shoestring internet marketer since 2002, and still utilize these methods for my own online ventures. It's by no means the fastest way to get results (try PPC for that), but it is highly effective at increasing traffic levels – and sales.

SEO Step #1: Get Your Meta Tags Done. Internet marketing experts disagree about how important this is, but if it only brings in 3, 5 or 10 percent more traffic – what can it hurt?

Remember to treat each page on your website individually, as discussed in the meta tag section above.

SEO Step #2: Have Your Web Copy Written Using Keyword Rich Text. This means writing your site's copy with SEO in mind. And I don't mean crappy, keyword-stuffed content either. No one wants to read that, and you cheapen your business's web presence by indulging in copy like this.

What using keyword-rich text means is to be aware of: (i) what the keywords are for your business niche; and (ii) ensure that you use them in your web copy.

Going a step further, write your copy for the web. What do I mean by this?

The Value of Professional SEO Copywriters

Professional SEO copywriters know how to write web copy that not only keeps SEO in mind, but makes it easily readable as well. For example, each page should have lots of lots of white space; paragraphs should not be more than 3-5 lines long (some say no more than four); bolded, descriptive headlines; keywords placed in certain places on the page; etc.

These are just some of the nuances of writing web copy that a professional SEO copywriter can help you with to make your copy more readable.

On Site Design & Navigation

As we're talking about web copy, I just want to elaborate on site design. Site design has to do with how visitors find stuff on your site. Accepted internet marketing wisdom is that a visitor shouldn't have to click more than one or two times to find information on your site. If they do, your site is considered to have poor site design.

Here again is where a professional copywriter can come in handy. They can recommend how text should be broken up, eg, this should be on its own separate page; this block of text makes more sense under this category; this page should link back to that page; etc.

I find that many site owners are too close to their sites to actually see stuff like this. It's like proofing your own writing – never a good idea (and I speak from way too much experience here). A fresh pair of eyes works wonders.

SEO Step #3: Start an Article Marketing Campaign: Article marketing is not sexy compared to say, social media marketing (discussed below). But, it is effective for long-term traffic generation.

How Article Marketing Drives Site Traffic

To understand how article marketing drives site traffic, let's go back to the basics of how and why web surfers use the internet.

They use it to find stuff; to ferret out information, remember?

If you want to capture these information seekers and turn them into customers, what do you need to do? Create trust; that's the foundation of any relationship – personal or professional. An old business mentor said to me once, people buy from those they: (i) know; (ii) like; and (iii) trust.

So how do you create trust on the internet? Providing informative, well-written content is one way to start. And, this is why article marketing is so effective.

If visitors read articles written by your company that provide them with answers to their questions, then they're likely to click through to your site*. Once they click through, if they encounter even more informative content, they begin to feel like they know you. The text that answers their questions will make them like you (hopefully) and then they'll start to trust you.

Once trust is established, sales will be that much easier to come by.

And, that's the power of marketing with articles.

**Note:* When you market with articles, at the bottom of each article there is a resource box with your site's info in it. See the "About the Author" section in the following article for an example of what I mean: <http://tinyurl.com/5eb3om>.

The Two Types of Articles Every Website Should Invest In

There two types of content (articles) that every website should invest in: "easy, breezy" content and foundational content.

What is "easy, breezy" content? Quite simply, this is the type of content you can fire off the top of your head usually. This is especially true if you really know your niche and have a wealth of information to impart. A 400-600 word article can take as little as 15 or 20 minutes to write.

Just because it's short and easy though does not mean this type of article shouldn't be informative and provide real value to the reader. This is where many fall down.

How to use easy, breezy content to drive traffic and increase sales: These types of articles are great for marketing - outside of your main web presence (eg, your website or blog). Use these types of articles in your article marketing efforts (ie, list in article directories), place them in forums, use as newsletter content, etc.

Foundational articles are your real work horses.

What are foundational articles? This is the more in-depth content. It should be unique, comprehensive and found only on your site. It should never be distributed to other sites.

How foundational articles increase sales: Foundational content leads to sales because it answers all the questions a really interested prospect who has clicked through from your easy, breezy

content may have. This is the type of content that will make visitors click the “Buy Now” button right off the bat. And, it will turn your site into an authority site, bringing repeat visitors – and increased sales.

How to Combine Easy, Breezy Content with Foundational Content to Drive Sales: With easy, breezy content, you capture a reader's attention by distributing it far and wide (eg, to article directories). Then, you drive them to more informative, unique, in-depth (foundational) content on your site. Thus, you increase your chance of making a sale.

The Benefits of Article Marketing

When I talk to clients, I explain article marketing to them in terms of links – as in, how backlinks drive web traffic (go back to Page 8 to refresh your memory on backlinks if you've forgotten).

There's much more to article marketing than backlinks, however.

Mass Advertising: Many online publishers will pick up articles they find in article directories and send them out to their newsletter subscribers, post them on their blog, on their website. This means more visitors to your site (remember, they'll access your site from the link in your resource box).

Become a Niche Authority: When you market with articles, your name/company name will start to appear all over the web in relevant searches – if the articles are written with SEO in mind. By doing this, you are establishing yourself as an expert in your niche.

Think about it, if you kept running across a particular company in a particular niche, wouldn't you eventually check them out?

“Quick Traffic” Tip: If you want quick traffic, a PPC (pay per click) campaign may be the way to go. If you decide to go this route, be sure to hire a search firm that has experience in this. Otherwise, you could waste a lot of money in a short period of time and wind up with very little traffic.

New Media Words does not offer PPC services. We'd be happy to recommend a firm or two that we know provides good results though.

How Often to Write and Distribute New Content

You should write and distribute **at least** one article a week via a service like <http://www.ContentCrooner.com>. Two or three times is ideal. In addition to this, you should add at least one foundational article a week to your site. I liken it to department store windows. They have to constantly change to keep fresh shoppers flowing in.

Search engines are hungry little monsters – like piranha – they eat up fresh content. Sites that are constantly updated with it get indexed more and tend to rank higher.

Note About ContentCrooner: This is our preferred provider, but there are many others like this, so shop around and choose one that fits your budget and your needs. Simply Google the phrase “article distribution” or “article marketing” to start your search.

Conclusion to Starting a Basic Internet Marketing Campaign

Getting your meta tags done, writing your copy with SEO in mind and starting an article writing and distribution campaign are the basics that every internet marketer should start with. On the following pages are some extras you can add on to get even more traffic.

Details: New Media Words' SEO article writing (<http://newmediawords.biz/seo-copywriting.htm>) and distribution service (<http://newmediawords.biz/article-submission.htm>).

ADVANCED ONLINE MARKETING STRATEGIES

Social Media Marketing

Social media is all the rage in internet marketing right now. What is it?

It includes marketing via social networking sites like Twitter, MySpace and Facebook. There are hundreds of these sites. These are some of the biggies.

Social media marketing is time consuming, and takes a commitment over the long haul. BUT, it is extremely effective in that if one of your posts, comments, links, etc. goes viral, it can drive tons of immediate traffic.

Over the long haul, it's a way to keep your name/brand constantly in front of new and old customers.

My advice on social media marketing? Choose one or two outlets and commit to them. Because social media networks require a give and take to be effective, trying to be involved with more than this just won't be as effective in my opinion.

Of course, we can handle this for you. Learn more about the services we offer in this area at <http://www.newmediawords.biz/social-media-marketing.htm>.

Blogging

Blogging is one of the most effective ways to brand your business. And, this is really what a blog is for.

Use it to talk to your audience about a variety of things – from the personal to the industry specific. Inform them about issues important to them in your niche; talk to them about what's going on with your company (eg, expanding, contracting; company holiday parties; company trips; company expos); new inventions in your niche; etc.

With a blog, you get to define a company "personality." This all goes back to building trust. Remember, to do this prospects must come to know and like you. Blogs are an excellent venue for accomplishing both of these goals.

And of course, we can handle this for you. We can provide relevant industry information that keeps your blog updated and relevant. For more personal company information – simply provide us the basic information, and we'll craft a relevant post. Although, inside company info would be better coming from you.

How often should you update your company blog? That depends. At least once a week is recommended. If your industry has constantly breaking news (eg, the stock market), multiple times a day would be more appropriate.

We can do it as often as you like. Get details at <http://newmediawords.biz/seo-blogging.htm>.

Other SEO Services

As you can see from our service listings, we offer other services, eg, press releases, case studies, ebook writing, etc. And these all have their place. However, the purpose of this tutorial is

to dispense the basics.

I hope I've given you enough info to make an informed decision about how to start marketing on the web – and, indeed, how vital it is that you do. Along these lines, here's one more thing to consider: according to eMarketer.com, a leading digital marketing and media research firm:

SEO tends to be less expensive than paid search . . . Therefore small increases in SEO spending can indicate outsize changes in marketing effectiveness relative to paid search. [Source: <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?id=1006182>].

For literally pennies, you can be doing continuous web marketing – the kind that drives traffic for years to come.

Closing Online Marketing / SEO Tip: Read Search Engine Guidelines

Because no one but the gatekeepers (eg, Google owners) know exactly how search engines work, there will always be some guesswork involved in SEO. Luckily, the vast majority of what you need to know to get your site to rank better is provided by the search engines themselves.

Read search engine guidelines. Every search engine has them. They will tell you how to make your site search engine friendly. Or, you can hire New Media Words to handle it for you.

Whatever you decide, good luck in your SEO and internet marketing efforts.

Sincerely,
Yuwanda Black
SEO Copywriting Specialist
New Media Words

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