



Why Search Marketing is Critical to Your Online Marketing Campaign

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Search is big business. Statistics reveal that 85% of all internet users rely on search engines to find information on the web and the top 10 search engines account for more than 90% of all search traffic. Americans conduct 790 million searches per week according to research from ComScore Media Metrix. A study by iProspect found that 90% of all searchers won't click past the first 3 pages of search results. If your website doesn't appear, it doesn't exist in the minds of searchers.

That's why "search engine marketing" (SEM) is important. SEM is everything you do to increase your site's rank and visibility in search engines. This is accomplished by strategically placing keywords throughout your website and buying advertising based on those keywords. The goal is to make it very easy for people searching for services like yours to find your website.

What is Search Engine Marketing?

SEM means two things: getting people to your website via search engines and then converting visitors into buyers or leads. If your SEM campaign doesn't focus on both these steps, it won't be effective.

Step 1: Getting Visitors To Your Site

Search engines send traffic to your website in two ways:

Organic listings - Organic listings are the bulk of the results that search engines generate when you search for a keyword. Marketers like organic listings because they bring in lots of traffic for free.

Paid listings - Getting listed in the organic results takes time and effort. If you want instant results, you can pay to be included in the "sponsored listings." With paid listings, you select a list of keywords and specify how much you are willing to pay to be found for those keywords. When a prospect searches for those keywords, your ad will be displayed. You only pay when a searcher clicks on your ad.

Step 2: Converting Website Browsers Into Buyers

Getting people to your website is only half the battle. You also have to get them to do something, such as buy your product, sign up for your newsletter, or request a consultation. If your visitors don't take action, you've lost them. And if you've paid for advertising to get them there, you've just thrown money down the drain.

In this step, you want to either convince prospects to buy from you or collect their contact information and permission to keep in touch..

Why Use Search Engine Marketing?

SEM is extremely popular because it produces quality leads. The people who search for keywords are raising their hands and identifying themselves as being interested in those particular keywords. They further qualify themselves by choosing to click through to your website to learn more.

Also, marketers like the pricing model because they can easily calculate

- ▶ how much you spend to get each person to your website
- ▶ how many of those people become leads or buy something
- ▶ how much profit you make

Everything can be tracked and measured in real time. If something isn't working, it can be tweaked or eliminated so more resources can be devoted to what works.

Very few other marketing tactics allow you to generate leads so easily and at a low cost while measuring every step of the process.

4 Steps to Getting a High Organic Search Engine Rank

Virtually all website owners wish that when searchers type specific keywords into search engines, their website will show up on the first page of search results. Having a high organic listing means you generate lots of traffic to your site for free.

Yet getting that coveted high ranking can be extremely difficult to do - especially for keywords with thousands or even millions of competing sites. Here are four critical steps to getting a high rank.

1 Create Unique Content and Frequently Update Your Website. The first key component to any SEM campaign is having unique, relevant content that you update frequently. There are lots of

sites out there that are similar to your topic. Why should search engines favor your site over all the others - especially when other sites are better? If you want to rank well in search engines, you must make your site a valuable resource for the types of visitors you want to attract.

2 Strategically Choose Keywords. You have a lot of competition vying for the same keywords you want. If you pick words that are too generic, you'll be competing with millions of sites for top placement. If you pick keywords that are too specific, you won't get much traffic because no one is searching for those terms. The best keywords find a happy balance between the two. That means doing

a lot of research to determine the best keywords and optimizing your site based on those keywords.

3 Use Keywords in Your Site's Navigation and Internal Links. How you link to pages within your site is extremely important. Your links should include keywords that tell search engines what content to expect when they follow your links.

4 Get Links From Other Websites Related to Your Topic. The final component of getting high rankings is getting other sites to link to your website. That said, not just any links will do. You need links from quality sites that are relevant to your topic.

Case Study: Mininno Law Offices



Mininno Law Offices is a New Jersey law firm specializing in Personal Injury, Medical Malpractice, and Criminal Defense law.

We've been running highly-targeted pay per click campaigns to bring in cases. First, we researched specific keywords and came up with several hundred possibilities. We then created landing pages focused on answering basic questions about the topic of law. The pages were designed to encourage serious inquiries to call the law firm or fill out a form on the website. Finally, we crafted a series of ads focused on those keywords and tested which ads pulled better results. The results have netted the firm numerous originations.

4 Steps to an Effective Pay Per Click Campaign

Because it can be difficult to get and maintain a high rank in search engines for many keywords, companies can choose to buy their way to the top. With pay per click advertising, search engines allow companies to run ads on the first few pages of search results.

It works like this: you tell search engines the maximum amount you are willing to spend on specific keywords and then create ads for those keywords. Search engines run your ad either above or beside the organic listings whenever someone searches for your specified keyword. If the searcher clicks on your ad, the search engine charges you an amount up to your maximum bid -the exact amount will depend on what your competitors have also bid for that keyword.

Here are 4 steps to a successful pay per click campaign:

1 Research Keywords. Like with search engine optimization, the first step in creating a pay per click campaign is to research keywords. Here, it is critical to find keywords that people are actually searching for and specifically, which keywords buyers are using.

2 Create and Place the Ad. Writing an effective ad is a critical component of your pay per

click campaign. With Google, you only have 95 characters to convince prospects of the benefits of your product or service, so your copy is extremely important. Simply tweaking a word or two can drastically improve the number of people that click on your ad. Once you've written the ad, you must decide where and how it is displayed. This can mean displaying the ad at a certain position or geographic area, during certain hours, or on specific sites.

3 Develop a Landing Page. The landing page is the page your prospect arrives at when they click your ad. This is where you must sell prospects on the benefits of your products or services and ask them to take action - to buy your product, sign up for your newsletter, or invite them to work with you.

4 Test Results. As with any advertising, it is important to test the results to see which keywords draw the most traffic, which ads are being clicked on the most, how changing your bidding amount affects click throughs, and whether changes to your landing pages can increase conversions. Successful campaigns continuously alter their ad and landing page copy to try to improve results.

Additional Resources

Here are some additional resources Morningstar Multimedia maintains:



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SEOGetListed.com

SEOGetListed.com offers tips and advice to professional services and small businesses who want to improve their rank in search engines.

Why choose us?

Our experience. Our skills. Our results.

Why should I hire you?

Morningstar specializes in online marketing and lead generation for professional services. Members of our team have been designing websites and running search marketing campaigns since 1995. We also have formal training in business, design, and information technology.

Can I work with you or should I work with a "local" firm?

We work with both local and national clients. Technology has overcome many of the barriers to communication. Conference calls can be just as effective as personal meetings. Email and the internet make communicating and presenting visuals easy and cost-effective.

How long does it take to see results?

For search engine optimization, it can take at least 3-6 months based on a number of factors including when your site is indexed and included in the results, how long it takes to get quality links, and how credible search engines sees your site. It can take several months to be included in directories. In addition, search engines usually won't give brand new sites high rankings until they demonstrate credibility, which can take months.

Pay per click advertising can take anywhere from a couple of minutes to several days depending on the

advertiser's editorial policy. However, once it's approved, your site shows up in search results and you can start monitoring conversions and tweaking the campaign immediately.

Why do I need ongoing search marketing services?

If you don't actively monitor your search marketing campaign, there is a good chance that many of your top rankings will lose their positions. There are a number of reasons why: search engines continuously change how they rank sites, competing sites are indexed by search engines daily, and your competition gets better at improving their search marketing.

What types of payment methods do you accept?

We prefer checks but we do accept credit card payments through PayPal. We also offer monthly installments for your convenience.

How do I start working with you?

Call us at 215-854-6404 to set up a consultation. All projects start with an initial consultation where we focus on your business objectives and expectations. If we both agree that we can help you, we will send you a proposal within one week. The project will begin when we receive an initial payment.

Our Process

1 Determine goals and objectives.

We work with you to set clear, focused goals and objectives to measure the success of the campaign.

2 Choose keywords. Keywords are the building blocks of all search marketing. We research keywords based on your site's content and actual search behavior.

3 Optimize website for keywords in content and links. Once we've chosen keywords, we make sure those keywords are included in your site's contents, links, and navigation.

4 Build links from relevant sites. We build links from major directories, similar sites, blogs, and article directories to increase your site's credibility with search engines.

5 Set up pay per click ads and landing pages. We establish which websites your site should target, set up pay per click ad campaigns, and build highly focused landing pages to convert visitors into leads or sales.

6 Test campaigns. We test all pay per click campaigns to see which ads and landing pages generate the best results.

7 Monitor Results. Because search engines change how they rank sites, we monitor your listings and make changes as necessary.

Call us for a free consultation or visit morningstarmultimedia.com.

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