

## **Targeted Traffic Makes Money:**

### **The Insider's Guide to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Marketing**

#### **Every Business Website Needs SEO**

Every small and medium sized business needs search engine optimization (SEO). Whether you offer services or sell products online, to stay competitive, it is crucial that your website is set up properly to rank high in the search engines. No other online marketing tool gives you the potential that SEO gives you. SEO helps you tap into the massive amount of quality leads available from search engines.

SEO levels the playing field like no other marketing medium. Without SEO, your website is an expensive billboard sitting in a forest where no one can see it. When your site is properly optimized for the search engines, you can rise to the top of the search engine listings and sit beside the biggest players.

Many small and medium sized businesses are making money through their websites. If your website is not bringing in the income you expected, it may be because no one knows your site exists. Through SEO, you can bring in the targeted traffic and leads that will put you on the road to profitability.

#### **Tap Into the Traffic: Reap the Profits**

SEO is the set of techniques used to position your site at the top of the search engine results pages. By tapping the right stream of traffic from the search engines, you will experience a wealth of new, targeted leads. These leads are the people you designed your site for in the beginning. The people that find your site through a search engine are seeking your specific information and products. Once you get them into the door, all the hard work you put into your website will take over, converting these visitors to revenues.

#### **Search Engines: The Only Way People are Sure to Travel the Web**

Search engine traffic moves people around the web more than any other form of navigation. According to a recent study, 77% of people surveyed use search engines to navigate the web. Meanwhile, only 3% of people use banner ads to move through the web. 22% of respondents said they use email ads to find websites. Only 29% use TV, radio, and print ads as their guides for online navigation.

Search engines account for more movement on the web than email ads, banner ads, and TV/radio/print ads combined. This fact is most astounding when you look at the costs of each of these advertising media as compared to SEO. Search engine optimization projects come in a wide range of costs, with many affordable packages available for small and medium sized businesses.

Another crucial factor is that once SEO is performed on your site, there is very little maintenance, and you keep benefiting from the returns. With SEO your site's positions can easily hold strong for a year or more, while your banner ads, email ads, TV, press, and radio ads, last for only as long as you pay.

Simply put, if your site ranks well on the search engines for the keywords that are related to your products and services, you may not need any other type of marketing. Think about the money and time saved when you can stop your mass marketing email, banner ad campaigns, pay per click campaigns, TV commercials, radio spots, and magazine ads.

### **SEO vs. Pay-Per-Click: SEO Wins**

There is more than one way to make a strong showing on the search engines, but SEO is the only way that you can achieve long-term success through the regular listings in a search engine's index.

Most major search engines now offer highly visible listings that can be purchased. However, once you stop paying for these, the search engine will take your listing right off the page. This is why the top SEO firms concentrate their efforts on placing your site within the regular index results of the major engines. To further this point, let us consider Overture.

### **Mighty Overture: Be Ready To Spend**

Overture is a very successful company that provides search listings to several of the major search engines. Each search engine that partners with Overture has its own unique way of displaying results from Overture, and they all have one thing in common; they only show the top few bidders on Overture for a given keyword. If you want to pay Overture to rank well for a keyword and you want your listing to be seen on MSN and Yahoo!, you will need to be one of the highest three bidders for that keyword term. You may be asking, "What do you mean bidding?"

### **Bidding for Ranking: Pay-Per-Click**

In order to rank number one on Overture you must be willing to out-bid and out-pay your competition. The system is based on bidding and click-throughs. If you are willing to pay 5 dollars at Overture to be number one, this means that each time someone clicks on your Overture listing, no matter if it is at Overture.com or one of their many partner sites including high traffic juggernauts MSN.com and Yahoo.com, you will pay 5 dollars to Overture. If you are going to follow this model, you better be darn sure that you are going to convert a huge percentage of these visitors to sales.

In addition to paying for each click-through on Overture, you will need to monitor your bid levels to make sure that your competition hasn't bid so high that you are no longer a top 3 bidder. Once you fall out of the top three, you are unlikely to be seen on the search engines. Not only do you have to pay-per-click, you need to spend time monitoring the bidding situation. Overture adds up to taking a lot of your money and time. Again, you better be sure you will realize a return on traffic from Overture because it will cost you.

### **Out of Cash: Goodbye Overture Rankings**

To summarize, Overture listings can get you the visibility you desire very quickly. The down side is that if you are after keywords that are competitive you could literally be paying \$10 or more every time someone clicks on your listing. Then, when you decide to discontinue your Overture service, your listing is removed.

### **Never Heard of SEO: You Are Not Alone**

If you have never heard of SEO, you are not alone. Few website design companies offer SEO services. A study done by several marketing companies on the top ranking website design firms in both Google and Lycos revealed that fewer than 20% of the firms even mention the importance of the search Engines in ecommerce and online marketing.

Most website design firms are ill equipped to handle your search engine promotion needs. If they do offer SEO services they still may not be as versed in the practice as the top professional SEO firms are. Design firms are concerned primarily with building your website the way you asked them to build it.

### **Website Design Firms: Lacking Current Search Engine Knowledge**

Most website design firms lack a fulltime SEO research department, and therefore are not likely to have a full grasp on the nature of the art and science of SEO. The art and science of SEO are constantly changing, and many web design companies may think they are in the know, when in

reality they think SEO is limited to putting keywords into Meta tags. Good SEO takes dozens of factors into consideration because the search engine algorithms also operate on dozens of factors. Putting keywords in your Meta tags is not enough; it is barely even scratching the surface.

### **SEO Professionals: Always in the Know**

You will find that the better SEO firms have fulltime research departments. SEO research departments are constantly researching all types of trends and news of the trade. From trends in Internet marketing to the latest developments in the search engines, SEO research departments stay in the know about happenings in the online world. Strong research departments keep the top SEO firms in the game because they get results.

### **SEO Works for Existing Sites, Site Redesigns & New Sites**

Fear not, almost every website can be optimized for the search engines. Again this is where the professional SEO firms come in. The top professional SEO firms specialize in optimizing existing Websites that lack the elements of search engine optimization.

These professional SEO firms can consult with you to make the necessary changes to your website so that it will move up in the search engine results pages. Some firms specialize in optimizing your existing site without compromising its looks, usability, or manageability.

If you are planning a site redesign, this is your chance to implement organic SEO. Organic SEO is the practice of designing websites that are optimized for the search engine from the ground up. Even if you have already hired a design firm for your website redesign, it's not too late to bring in an SEO consultant. Your SEO consultant can look at the new site design and make suggestions to optimize the site. This way, when your site is launched, it already has the elements the search engines are looking for.

### **Optimizing for the Right Search Engines**

Which search engines are important? SEO firms keep watch on the trends in search engine usage. They know which engines people use, and whether or not each search engine is rising or declining in popularity. SEO firms also know which search engines work together and which are independent. While there are literally thousands of search engines on the web, statistics show that majority of all search engine traffic is directed by only a handful. Among the most popular search engines are Google, Yahoo!, MSN, and AOL.

The top search engines often license their databases for use in other companies' search results. Relationships among the top search engines change rapidly. This is why SEO research is so important. Your SEO firm will direct you to the right baskets to put your eggs in so that your targeted reach is as wide as possible, and your cash flow keeps growing.

### **Paid Inclusion: Not the Same as Pay-Per-Click**

Earlier we discussed the Overture search engine and its pay-per-click model. Another way search engines can generate income is called paid inclusion. In this case you pay a one time, usually annual, fee that buys your spot in a search engine's index. This fee in no way guarantees that you will rank well for your important keywords. Rather, the fee ensures that the search engine lists your site among the millions of other sites that paid to get in.

### **SEO Firms Specialize in Optimized Paid Inclusion**

Top SEO firms research the paid inclusion search engines to learn what is effective. They can help you with the entire paid inclusion process, including which pages to have the search engine include. SEO firms know that it is not just paying for the inclusion that is important. You need to have all included pages optimized for the search engine's algorithm so that you can rise in rankings over the millions of others who are also paying to be included.

When you rank well in a paid inclusion search engine, you will not have to pay each time

someone clicks on your site from the search engine's result page. If you achieve high rankings, you will save a bundle of money when you compare what you could have spent on a pay-per-click listing like Overture. In addition, your paid inclusion usually lasts a year. So, for a small price you can buy a long-term listing that has the potential to pay for itself in as little as one sale, the rest is profit.

**Final Notes: SEO the Best Buy in Internet Marketing – Earns You Cash**

- SEO is the key to ranking well on the search engines for the long-term.
- High search engine rankings are more apt to be converted to cash.
- Studies show that the majority of online users are using search engines to navigate the web.
- Most of these people are using a small number of top search engines (or their partner sites).
- Most website design firms do not offer complete SEO. If they do, they often lack the knowledge of the top professional SEO firms.
- Pay-per-click campaigns can give you instant visibility but they are costly, and your listing disappears when you stop paying.
- SEO firms specialize in the paid-inclusion search engines, as well as the free inclusion search engines.
- New websites and redesigned websites alike can be optimized for the search engines right out of the gate, saving time and money.
- Existing websites can be optimized without compromising usability and design standards.
- High positions in search engines, give you the highest return you can get in Internet Marketing. The results are long lasting, require little maintenance, and are key to making money.
- Typical small and medium sized business SEO plans begin at \$3000.00 per year – an amount easily justified with higher traffic and sales.

**Internet Prodigies, Inc.**

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