

Search Engine Marketing-A Study of Marketing in Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

In this digital era of marketing a business can find and reach suitable customer only through new and innovative technologies. Now time has changed and customers are more aware about internet marketing and search engine marketing can attract potential customers. From the researches, it comes to know that 61% of worldwide internet users research products online and 44% of online shoppers start by using a search engine¹. The focus of the paper is on the methods, metrics and on the techniques of search engine marketing through which customers can be attracted.

Keywords:

Internet, Result Pages, Search Engine, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Websites.

INTRODUCTION

Search engine marketing (SEM) is a kind of Internet Marketing. It includes the promotion of websites via increasing their visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs) through optimization and advertising. With search engine optimization (SEO), SEM can adjust or rewrites website content for achieving a higher position in search engine results pages.¹ All this is done by using a mixture of search engine-optimized website design, paid advertising, high-quality marketing copy etc. In other words, search engine marketing emphasis on purchasing ads which appears on the results pages of search engine e.g. Google, Yahoo etc. In SEM, search engine offers lots of ways to purchase ads, which normally become visible above or to the right side of the content on the search result pages. If anyone offers to pay higher fee for an ad then the page will appear higher ads.

SOME FACTS RELATED TO SEARCH ENGINES

Following are the facts related to search engines²:

¹ <http://www.hubspot.com/marketing-statistics>

² <http://www.searchenginejournal.com/24-eye-popping-seo-statistics/42665/>

1. 65-70% of the search engine market share owns through the Google .
2. 93% of online experiences are the result of a search engine.
3. Marketing Charts shows that 61% of customers come from search.
4. More than 100 billion worldwide searches being conducted per month.
5. Above 82% of internet users use search engine.



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METHODS AND METRICS USED IN SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

In search Engine Marketing four types of methods and metrics are used for optimizing websites. These are as follows:

(1) Keyword Research and Analysis

This method includes following three Steps:

Step-I: To make sure that the site can be indexed in the search engines.

Step-II: To find the most appropriate and well-liked keywords for the site.

Step-III: To use these chosen keywords on the site so that traffic will generate and convert.

Generally, internet searching is the initial step for each potential buyer, so that search perception impact builds the brand impression for each potential buyer. Search perception impact is the identified impact of a brand's search results on potential buyer perception which also includes site indexing, title and keyword focus.

(2) Saturation and Popularity of Website

Saturation of website means the presence of the website on search engines. A website's saturation can be analyzed through the number of pages of the site which are indexed on search engines. Popularity of website means the number of backlinks the site has. For saturation and popularity of a website, pages have to include keywords for what people are looking for and also ensure that they rank highly in search engine rankings.

(3) Back End Tools

These include web analytical tools and HTML validators. These tools and validators give data on a website. Variety of these tools are from uncomplicated traffic counters to tools which work with log files and also to more complicated tools based on page tagging (which means to put JavaScript or an image on a page to track action).

The main advantages of these tools are that they can deliver conversion-related information. For example, EBSCO uses following three important tools:

- (i) log file analyzing tool:
Web Trends by NetIQ
- (ii) tag-based analytical tool:
WebSideStory's Hitbox, and
- (iii) transaction-based tool:
TeaLeaf RealTea

Validators perform the following functions:

1. To check the unseen parts of websites.
2. To ensure websites meet W3C code standards, and
3. To emphasize potential problem and some usability issue.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEM (SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING) AND SEO (SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION)

The scope of SEM is wider than SEO. SEM itself incorporates SEO. SEM includes both paid search results and organic search results (SEM). In the course of search engines, SEM advertises the website or business to internet customers and also send a more targeted traffic to the website but SEO provides only better organic search

results. In other words, SEO may be considered as a subset of SEM.

SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING TECHNIQUES

Search engines adjust their algorithms so that search engine marketing techniques keep shifting with the time. Generally, search engines use difficult programmes. The idea of this is to make sure that their visitors locate meaningful content. However, search engine marketing uses following strategies:

1. Search Engine Optimization Technique

Through search engine optimization techniques, companies employ diverse techniques for associating their websites with particular keywords. This technique includes both on-page and off-page methods. For example, a web designer might show text on the home page of a website with several preferred keywords. At present, for creating backlinks, various companies submit articles to third-party websites. In general, search engine optimization techniques give optimistic and natural results.

2. Pay Per Click Advertising Technique

Pay Per Click Advertising (PPCA) technique is a very well-known method to improve a website's level in various engines. All flourishing companies sell advertising space on their website. By using Pay Per Click Advertising technique, a company generates customers or consumers for their products and services.

3. Paid Inclusion in Search Engines Technique

In this technique, a search engine sells advertising space inside of its result. Search engine providers are paid for listing their websites in search results according to defined keywords. Now, association of a website with definite search terms become easy. Under this technique, fees will be charged in the form of annual subscription for one webpage, which is catalogued automatically in a regular manner. However, there are a few other companies also which show purchased listings permanently with no-subscription fee. Fees may be charged on per-click basis. Different search engines charge fees in a different way. A number of websites allow only paid inclusion. Some other search engines, e.g., Yahoo allow mix inclusion, i.e., per page fee and per-click fee with search results.

DATA RELATED TO SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING OVER THE PERIOD OF TIMES

Following are the data related to search engine marketing:

- Worldwide, above 130 billion searches conducted per month on the web. (Comscore, January 2010)
- The web is used by the 57% of T.V. viewers simultaneously. (Nielsen, 2009)

- 70% of the links search users click on are organic, not paid. (Marketing Sherpa, February 2007)
- Out of all organic clicks, 60% goes to the top three organic search results. (MarketingSherpa, February 2007)
- The first page of search results is never scrolled by 75% users. (MarketShareHitsLink.com, October 2010)
- 2% of average click-through rate was for paid search in 2010 (worldwide). (Convatio, January 2011)
- Businesses having websites of 401-1000 pages get 6 times more leads than those having 51-100 pages. (HubSpot Lead Generation Lessons from 4,000 Businesses, 2011)

CONCLUSION

Business recognizes the significance of SEO like never before. The growth in the search engine marketing field has been unbelievable, far exceeding most other industries. In the past achieving listings in search engines has been very much taken for granted by many businesses, being treated as less important as the normal marketing methods such as newspaper, television and radio advertising. With more internet consumers utilizing search as their first options for finding a business of choice, search engine marketing has come to the front position of marketing. Search Engines have become increasingly complicated, in many ways they still can't see and understand a web page the same way a human does. Apart from this, Search Engine Optimization is one such method where the marketing is done to all potential customers. It is a known fact that people use Search Engines to get the information about products or services. This study concludes that Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is an effective advertising tool to improve a company's ranking on search engines. With the help of various search engines e.g., Google, Yahoo etc. a company can increase its visibility and through search engine marketing techniques a company can find and reach suitable customers.

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