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Developing an Internet Marketing Strategy

The Internet Marketing Academy



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Preface

Introduction To Internet Marketing

Internet Marketing can look a little daunting with all of its many components. SEO, PPC, Social Media, Blogs, plus much more! – it can all be quite overwhelming.

In this textbook you will cover the essential topics that make up Internet Marketing as an activity.

It covers where the internet has been and where it is today and it describes what all of the main marketing activities are online.

Sean McPheat, a serial entrepreneur and internet marketing authority is the author of this publication. Sean owns many successful online businesses ranging from an International Training business through to dozens of mini sites selling different products and services online. Sean is the founder of the Internet Marketing Academy which aims to improve the standards of internet marketing around the globe. Sean has been featured on CNN, BBC, ITV, on numerous radio stations and has contributed to many newspapers. He's been featured in over 250 different publications.

Sean is a high in demand consultant and speaker on topics related to internet marketing and making money online and estimates show that he has created over £20,000,000 of leads and £6,000,000 of sales all through the internet. That does not include all of the millions that he has helped his clients to make!



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Please visit our website www.internetmarketingacademy.com to download some of the very internet marketing cheat sheets that Sean has used to build his online empire.

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1 First Steps to an Internet Marketing Strategy

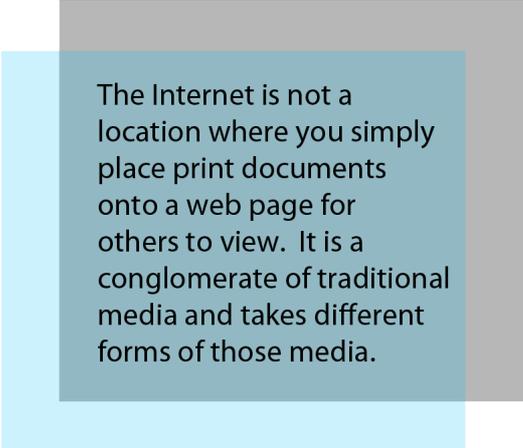
1.1 Introduction

With the introduction of the Internet, there came many changes to the way a company might carry out a particular marketing strategy. The Internet is a dynamic system, with both companies and consumers having to adapt to the rapid pace at which it moves. For companies, this means that competition has become global. Target demographics are no longer geographically limited, expanding across countries and continents. These expansions, though, mean that companies have to adapt different types of strategies from what they are used to with offline marketing.

Online marketing is no longer an option; it is a necessity. Still, that's not all bad news. Planning your Internet marketing strategy does not have to be a difficult task, particularly if the competition doesn't fully understand that the rules of Internet marketing are not the rules of traditional marketing. This ebook will teach you the basics of how to craft your Internet marketing strategy to maximum effect, from website building to web analytics. First, let's look at some preliminary aspects to Internet marketing as well as what exactly marketing is.

1.1 The Internet as a Marketing Medium

One of the first, and perhaps most important aspects to consider is that the Internet is an entirely different medium. The Internet is not a location where you simply place print documents onto a web page for others to view. It is a conglomerate of traditional media and takes different forms of those media. Utilizing the web's unique tools is key to understanding and creating an online marketing strategy that works. The web offers unique opportunities for the savvy Internet marketer, and those should be exploited to provide the consumer and potential prospects with richer experiences.



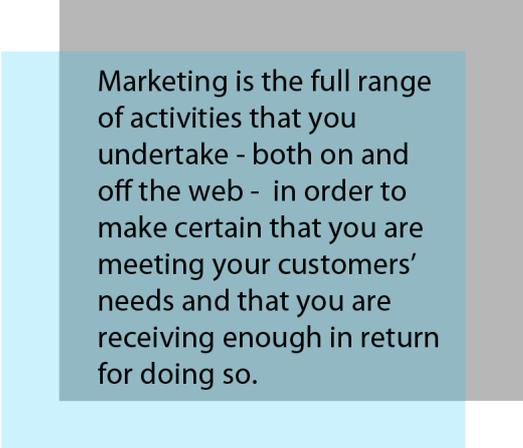
The Internet is not a location where you simply place print documents onto a web page for others to view. It is a conglomerate of traditional media and takes different forms of those media.

Your marketing strategy should employ multiple tools beyond simply the printed word. Companies use tools like video, photographs, forums, audio podcasts, and many others to get the message to their consumers and build lasting customer relationships. To get a feel for how certain companies use these tools, search around the web and see what others are doing. Ask yourself, what kinds of tools are they using? How often do they use these tools? How do these companies make effective use of these tools?

One more important question to ask yourself is this: How do these tools work together to maximize effective marketing? The simple use of one or multiple web tools does not guarantee a working online marketing strategy. What makes the marketing strategy effective is how the tools work together to get the consumer to be interactive – to take the action that you want them to take. Would a video of a product or service be effective without an accompanying blog? Would a description of a product be effective without a picture for the consumer to see? Would a consumer want to read the homepage of a website if it contained nothing but text? These questions will help you begin the process of learning the effectiveness of these tools and their interaction with each other.

1.2 The Principles of Marketing

Planning your Internet marketing strategy, of course, means being familiar with all the basic principles of marketing itself. When you think about what marketing entails, are you clear on exactly what is included? A good definition of marketing is that it is the full range of activities that you undertake - both on and off the web - in order to make certain that you are meeting your customers' needs and that you are receiving enough value in return for doing so. Note that we said 'enough' value; you need to be receiving enough in return that it is worth the time and investment that you are taking to provide the service or product that you offer.



Marketing is the full range of activities that you undertake - both on and off the web - in order to make certain that you are meeting your customers' needs and that you are receiving enough in return for doing so.

Marketing is related to advertising, promotion, PR, and sales, but is actually a distinct activity that helps prepare you and your organization to perform the related activities thoroughly and well. You could actually think of advertising, promotion, PR, and sales as being influenced by your Internet marketing strategy, such as in Figure 1 below.

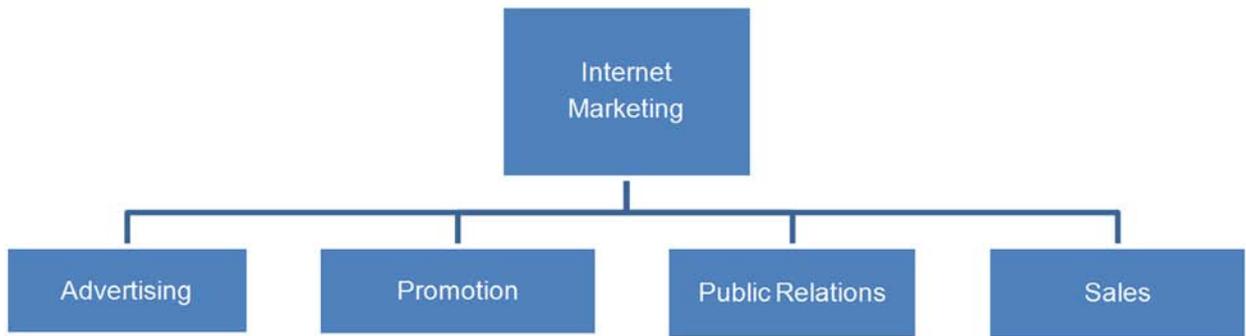


Figure 1: Internet Marketing Influences Other Related Activities

Internet marketing, like marketing off-site (off of your website), requires that you know enough about your customers and markets that you know how best to price, sell, and distribute your product or service. Doing so requires a level of marketing research and the development of a marketing plan. But before we discuss marketing research and planning, let's look further at how Internet marketing is related to other activities by defining each one and how they are performed in the online environment.

1.2.1 Advertising

Advertising is the process of bringing your product or service to the attention of your prospects and customers. For Internet marketing, this means finding new ways to drive traffic, or visitors, to your website. Online advertising can take many forms: banner ads, pay-per-click (PPC) ads, links placed on other websites and more. Usually advertising is focused on one product at a time or one segment of your target market at a time. So, your Internet marketing plan might require several different advertising campaigns in order to help generate the number of customers and sales that you need. Advertising can and should also occur off-line, through direct mail, commercials, personal representation, or other collateral, always including your website address so that customers can learn more about you online. Advertising may also involve ways of letting your customers know about special offers or pricing that is limited in time or scope.

1.2.2 Promotion

Promotion can be thought of as the way to keep your company, product, or service in front of your customer. It can help to generate more demand for the product as well. Whereas it might include advertising as part of your promotional strategy, it also includes publicity, public relations, and sales. Some of this promotion can be done online through sales efforts, press releases, offering a free information product, or writing targeted email campaigns, but some will also be done off-line. Any effort that you make to improve or enhance the image of your organization, sell more products, or get the name of your organization into the thoughts of your customers and potential customers is part of promotion.

1.2.3 Public Relations

Public relations, or PR, involves developing your company's image and brand so that it is perceived by the public in the way you want it to be perceived. For example, you might want your company to be seen as the leader of the pack in your field, or you might focus on showcasing the community service that your company provides in the areas where they operate. When you are speaking about an online form of public relations, you need to consider first and foremost what your website looks like and how it operates. Is it young and trendy because that's who your target audience is? Or is it more traditional and less focused on social media because your products appeal to an older demographic? Your website can be thought of as the "front line" of your public relations strategy.

PR also involves representing your organization to the media. You should have someone designated to speak to the press who is able to represent your organization's interests and strengthen the image you want to portray – as well as answering any questions about your products or services. Your PR department or representative would send press releases announcing new products or services, answer complaints that the press might have picked up on, and generally be 'the face' of your company to the public. This might require adopting some form of technology on your website so that the press and customers can both communicate with you.

1.2.4 Sales

This activity is the easiest to understand. It's the act of locating, informing, and agreeing on terms of the purchase with your customers. Before the Internet, this would have happened by attempting to drive customers into your store or onto your phone lines. Today, many people will first look for you online. So in online sales, you need to help your customers find you. However, the Internet is full of other websites clamoring for the attention of the same customers. You will need to actively market your company, your services, and your products to reach these customers. There are a number of strategies that we will discuss that will help you do just that.

1.3 Planning Online and Offline Marketing Strategies

Though the planning process may seem like an obvious step to take, it is a common mistake for companies to have inconsistent strategies both online and offline. The goals for any strategy are simple enough:

- Determine the measurable goals of your strategy
- Establish a calendar and milestones to reach
- Decide on qualitative goals and quantitative goals

The strategies of your online marketing and your offline marketing may differ in certain aspects, but the goals should remain consistent with one another. Most importantly, the decisions you make on what tools to use and how to present them should be based on the customer. Let's take a look at planning an online strategy and how it should be integrated.

1.3.1 Online Marketing Strategy Planning

Online marketing involves research to find out your target demographics and your ideal customer's personal values. We will go deeper into this topic in a later chapter, but here are some basic guidelines to get started in researching your customers.

- **Target Your Audience** – Hone in on the average customer your product or service is sure to appeal to. Accessing this information is crucial to developing your marketing strategy. Find a nonintrusive way online to find out what kind of customer he is and think of his values when beginning to form a marketing strategy.
- **Think of the Ideal Customer** – What kind of customer do you want to develop a relationship with? Thinking of the ideal customer is a good way to develop the ways your marketing strategy will play out. It will also allow you to broaden the appeal of your product or service if this ideal customer is not the same as the average customer.
- **Assess Values** – This extends to the values a customer has in both the product and the means of marketing. A customer will expect good quality and pricing, but what will he expect when it comes to the ways you market to him? Is he interested in a video demonstrating the product or service? Does he want to read other customer reviews of the product or service?
- **Provide Information** – Customers expect information on the product or service they could potentially purchase. Become a resource of reliable and trustworthy information. It will build relationships with customers and brand your company as trustworthy.

1.3.2 Integrating Online and Offline Planning

Your online strategy planning and your offline strategy planning should complement one another. Sometimes, the marketing strategy of one may simply be an extension of the other. When managing a company's website, keep in mind the company's ultimate goals and integrate both the online marketing strategy and the offline strategy. They should be consistent for the ease of the company and the perception of the customer.



When managing a company's website, keep in mind the company's ultimate goals and integrate both the online marketing strategy and the offline strategy.

As an example, let's say your company provides information on its product or service through the website. What if FAQs, reviews, or blogs are not enough for the customer and he needs to contact a live person via telephone? A phone number can be placed on the website, easily found and seen. Providing the number is an offline service that is handled by a customer service representative.

This is an example of connecting online and offline strategies. What works for one customer may not work for another, so providing alternatives between online and offline activities allows greater access to everyone. You can satisfy many more customers by meeting the demands of many different kinds of customers. Integration of both strategies means ensuring the customer's awareness of online and offline activities.

1.4 What To Expect in this Ebook

We have only touched the surface so far to the inner workings of Internet marketing and how to craft an effective strategy. In the next few chapters, we will cover the following:

- Planning and Creating a Website
- Social Media and Content Marketing etc.
- Search Engine Marketing
- Web Analytics

Each chapter is full of information on how to optimize your marketing strategy to its fullest potential. Most importantly, it will maximize the relationships you build with your customers.

2 Planning and Creating Your Website

2.1 Introduction

Your Internet marketing strategy cannot be a complete online strategy if you do not own and run a website. Every company must have a website these days, especially with consumers finding most of their information on the web. Think about how a customer is going to go about finding information about anything, including your company and your product. Gone are the days where people get their information from television ads or telephone books. They are going to find information the easiest way possible, which is through the Internet.

The website is your home base operation, a place where your customers will gather information and potentially purchase your products.

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The way you should adapt your Internet marketing strategy is by creating a place that holds the information a prospective customer needs. Your first step should be to create a website and keep it running with updates and the newest tools. Your website will be an important place for the customer. The website is your home base operation, a place where your customers will gather information and potentially purchase your products. Additionally, the website itself is a form of online marketing for your business. If it is designed correctly, search engines will recognize your website as having the results that your potential customers are looking for.

The following section will teach you the basics of planning out your website as well as the creation of your website. We will also include some useful tips to keep in mind in regards to a good Internet marketing strategy.

2.2 Planning Your Website

Before you actually go about creating your website and registering it with a host, there are a couple of things to think about and plan for the future. The number of websites on the Internet is a staggering number, up in the hundreds of millions. You may be asking yourself, “how can I compete and make my mark with that much competition?” It all starts with the website and designing it correctly.

Let us look at a few preliminary steps to think of that will be discussed in the following section. These preliminary steps include:

- Selecting a domain name
- Selecting the web host
- Determining who will manage the site
- Deciding who will make the site’s creative content
- Itemizing your end goals
- Formatting the site’s layout

2.2.1 Selecting a Domain Name

When planning your website, it will be essential that you have a domain name that grabs the attention of your current and prospective customers. Most of the time, you should include your company’s name as the domain name, but there are other things to consider when choosing a domain name.

- Match the Domain Name and URL - First, we should mention that a site’s domain name and its website name are not necessarily the same thing. Don’t worry if this sounds confusing. Most people do not know this and will not take this into consideration when choosing a domain and website name. Domain names are the names that a site is called, and this name must be registered with a registrar. You must also annually pay a fee for the rights of that name. This is what your website is called.

A website name, or the URL, is the actual web address that you type into a browser's address bar to get to that website. The domain name could be entirely different, but the most direct way to access the website is through the website name. Think about your customers, and how easy it would be if they had to remember just one name to get to your website. This is why the domain name should match the website name. Customers do not want to spend time remembering multiple names. You want to simplify how they find you, and this is one of the first steps. So, make your domain name the same as your website's URL. This will be a much easier process for customers.

- Domain Name Length – Consider how long your domain name will be and ask yourself the following questions: Will it be too long to say in normal conversation? Can it be posted easily to brochures, billboards, or advertisements? Can people easily spell it? These questions are important to consider because simplification is key. You should assume that if it is tough to say in normal conversation, it will not be said. You should also assume that if it is hard to spell, people will misspell it. The bottom line is this: Go with something simple.
- Company Name – Before determining whether or not to put the name of your company into the domain name, think about the following. Is your company's name easy to remember? Is it a tongue twister? Are there any other companies out there with a similar name? Does your company sell something unique from everyone else?

You might think that simply naming the domain after your company is the way to go, but reconsider that thought. If your company's name is not easy to remember, then your domain and website name will not be either. If it is difficult to pronounce or spell, it will be difficult to remember the website name. If there are companies out there with a similar name that they own the rights to, your website could potentially be shut down. Finally, if your company sells something unique, you should consider putting that into the title of the domain and website name. Ultimately, you are going to want to have a domain name that sticks in your customer's mind.



The new Top Level Domain (TLD) .co is gaining some recognition as a global TLD, particularly with the conversion of companies like Overstock.com to O.co.

- Top Level Domain (TLD) - Also consider TLD - the ending or endings you will use for your domain name. They are designed to be used as follows:
 - .us, .uk or other two letter country designations identify the country of the business
 - .biz is for business use
 - .com is for commercial websites
 - .net was originally designed for networking technology companies but is now general use
 - .edu is for educational organization websites
 - .gov is for government websites
 - .org is for nonprofit organization websites
 - .info is for informational websites
 - .co is a new domain that is global but not yet as recognized as .com

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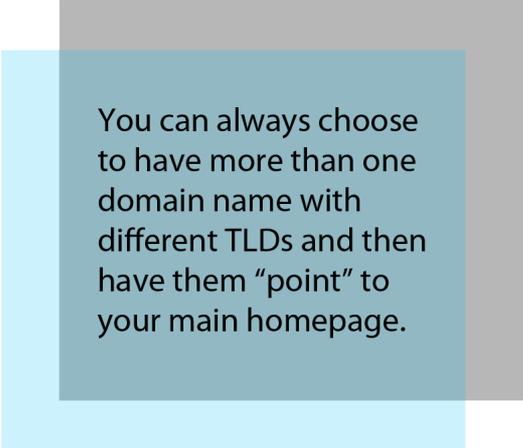
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If you are concerned about competition using your domain name but with a different top level domain ending, you can always purchase more than one domain and set the second or third domains to “point” to your main website - or even to a specific page on your main website. This is helpful for another reason as well; you can have more than one domain name so that you can do some split testing in your marketing campaigns. For example, you could use one domain name in one campaign and another domain name in a separate campaign and see which one pulls in more customers (note that you don’t need to have a separate domain to run split tests - you can often get the information you need from the advertising platform’s software).



You can always choose to have more than one domain name with different TLDs and then have them “point” to your main homepage.

2.2.2 Selecting the Web Host

Web hosts are a network of computers and servers that hold all the information about your sites and the pages of your sites. Users are able to view and access these pages and sites by connecting to the web hosts. Before you can launch your website, you must first sign up with a web host. There are two kinds of web hosting services: free and commercial.

- **Free** – Free web hosts are beneficial if you are looking to save some money. However, there are more restrictions imposed on free web hosting services than paid web hosting services. For certain services, you may be required to put banners and advertisements on your pages. You may also be limited in the size of your files and the types of script you can use. Your bandwidth and speed can also be limited.

This may seem like a lot of downsides, but when you think about your Internet marketing strategy, you must also think about the expense. Is it worth it to have your site hosted for free, but have ads plastered all over the page? Sometimes, you might not have a choice but to start with a free host and work your way up. After all, every company and website has to start somewhere.

- **Commercial** – This type of hosting means that you pay to have your site hosted. Having a host that you pay offers many more benefits than a free host. The amount of advertisement on the site is reduced to little or no advertising at all. There are far less restrictions than a free host and your speed and bandwidth are greatly increased. This seems to be a very nice proposition, but are there any downsides?

You want to be careful how much you spend on commercial web hosting services. Paying very little is cost effective, but can mean that the service does not have the hired help to assist you if there is any problem. Paying a lot may mean you have a lot more service and assistance, but is the amount you pay worth it?

The bottom line for deciding on what kind of web hosting service you needs comes down to a combination of the cost, how reliable they are, and the features they offer. Do some research prior to choosing and see who is recommended as the best for how much you pay. Look into the features they have and if they have any restrictions.

2.2.3 Who Will Manage the Site?

One important decision to make when planning on creating a website is to decide on whether or not to hire a professional to make the site. The other option is for you or an already hired employee to create the site. There are pros and cons to either option.



Professionals have been trained to use many different tools and even know how to utilize social media to market your company

If you hire a professional, you have a better chance at having a site being made with great creative prowess. Professionals have been trained to use many different tools and even know how to utilize social media to market your company (this will be discussed in a later chapter). If your company grows, then the profits you make will outweigh the cost of hiring a professional. The downside, however, is that hiring a professional costs money. If you are a small company, you may not be able to afford an expense like this.

Doing it yourself, or having an already hired employee plan and create the site, is efficient because you have someone doing two jobs for less cost. There are plenty of tutorials on the Internet and books to teach you how to make an effective website. The downside, however, is that if you do this yourself with little training, the site may come out generic or without the full functionality you would like.

What you ultimately want is for the website to stand out from the competition while providing the functionality and professional image that you want. Keep these things in mind if you decide to hire a professional or do it yourself.

2.2.4 Who Will Make the Site’s Creative Content?

The creative content on your website can include many different types of information. First is the copy, or the actual words on your website. How you describe your company, its services and its products will all impact how the customer views you. Then you have the creative content like the graphics and logos that reflect the image or brand of your company. Are you a traditional consulting firm or a clothing company that targets teenagers? You can imagine how the graphics and logos for these two companies would be completely different. You may also need content on a regular basis like articles, blogs, or other informational products.

The question is the same as the previous section on deciding whether to hire a professional. The professional knows how to make a site, and she is likely to have a creative background as well. In fact, many web designers will have contacts with copywriters and graphic designers who can help you create the unique content for your site. Learning yourself is always possible, but it will depend in part on how much time you are able to dedicate to wearing another “hat” in your business.

Plus, there are guidelines to writing and creating content for the web that are different from how you write for print advertising. If you aren’t familiar with the differences, you could end up with creative content that doesn’t work well inside the infrastructure of your site or that doesn’t draw traffic to your site the way that it would if you had a professional do it for you. Still, hiring does cost money, so this is an expense you should keep in mind. Again, think about the size of the company and whether or not you can afford to hire a professional. Will hiring a professional benefit you in the long run?

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2.2.5 What Will the Site's Layout Be?

Again, before you make the site yourself, consider whether you know what the layout of the site will entail. Before starting on the creation process, do a rough sketch on paper of how exactly the site will be laid out, how the pages will connect to each other and how a visitor to the site will navigate through your pages. Whether or not you hire a professional, there are a few things to keep in mind.



The home page is most likely to be the first page that a user visits, so you want to make a good impression with good aesthetic design and easy navigation.

First, a home page should be designed to catch the attention of the user. The home page is most likely to be the first page that a user visits, so you want to make a good impression with good aesthetic design and easy navigation. Also think about how you want to convey to him that you are a trustworthy company, and one that provides reliable information. Be sure to convey this information through text and visuals.

Next, there should be a section or page dedicated to telling users about the company. The “About” section is important because it is visited by people who are seeking information about the company, its experience and its credibility. Your “About” page should include a summary of the company, a statement of its mission and goals, and it could even include pictures and biographies of the company’s leadership. .

The website should also be professionally designed to reflect the culture or brand of your company. You are going to want the customer to get the right “feel” of your company from the design, colors, fonts, and more. Are you a luxury hotel company? A music label? An auction site? All of these websites would have significantly different graphics that convey the company’s brand. Everything from the font you choose to the colors of the background to the way the customer moves through the site all convey a message to your customer about your company.

Finally, make sure that the website provides the customer with the experience you want them to have from a navigation standpoint. Most readers are scanners of information, so plan on making navigation clear by emphasizing important information like contact information, or a link to another page with pertinent information about a product, or a map to your physical “brick and mortar” location if you have one. Your site should always be designed with the customer in mind – not with your own organizational preferences. Can the customer find return and warranty information easily? Do pages link to each other in a way that makes finding information easy to do? Is placing an order or requesting more information about a product or service easy to do? If a customer is frustrated by your website, they are unlikely to remain a customer – or even a visitor - for very long.

2.2.6 What Are Your End Goals?

Your website should also be designed with your end goals in mind. For example, if your desire is to sell products on your website, you may need e-commerce software and applications so that you can create a product catalog and complete a sale. But if your website is designed to be informational so that you can draw visitors and build a reputation for yourself, you won't necessarily need e-commerce applications. Whatever your goal is, there should be one or more actions that you want the customer to take – and how successful your website is will be based on how many customers take that action. For example, you might want a visitor to:

- Sign up for a free newsletter or report so that you capture their email address
- Register or join as a “member” and pay a subscription fee
- Sign up for a free trial of something
- Click on an affiliate link or advertisement that generates a commission for you
- Call you or fill out a request for more information about your product or service
- Make a purchase
- Use your service/product online
- Refer others to your website
- Download your software, ebook, or more

2.3 Creating Your Website

So now you have plans for a website and a clear direction for where you want to go with it. At this point, you should use all of your plans and start to make that website. In the following section, we will teach you how to create your site and give you tips to keep in mind as part of your Internet marketing strategy. The following are the steps to take for creating a successful and effective website:

- Designing Your Site's Web Pages
- Testing Your Site
- Getting Noticed

2.3.1 Designing Your Site's Web Pages

If you sketched out a rough draft of your website, now is the time to get those plans out and put them to use. Assuming that you have not hired a professional to set up and create the website, you will have to use software that act as HTML, CSS and ASCII editors. Here are a few kinds of software that will help you design web pages.

- Dreamweaver
- Notetab Light
- CodeLobster (Multiple Editions)
- HAPedit
- Arachnophilia
- PSPad
- Notepad ++
- Bluefish
- HTML Kit

Each piece of software offers the ability to make web based pages, but they each may have different tools and features. Software like Dreamweaver presents the text as a word document, making it easier for the designer to create his site without the hassle of HTML tags and codes. Don't worry if you're not entirely familiar with each of these. There are tutorials on the Internet that can teach you how to use the software and how to implement them.

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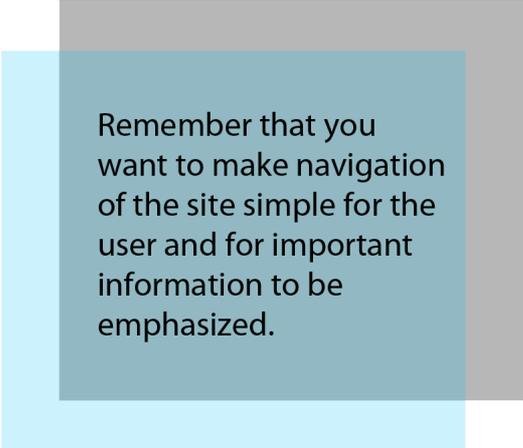
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Remember that you want to make navigation of the site simple for the user and for important information to be emphasized.

Remember that you want to make navigation of the site simple for the user and for important information to be emphasized. Make sure your contact information is clearly visible, especially on your home page. Also make sure that your readers can find the information they are likely to be looking for. As we stated in a previous section, readers are scanners of information. Try to think of what they are looking for and highlight it.

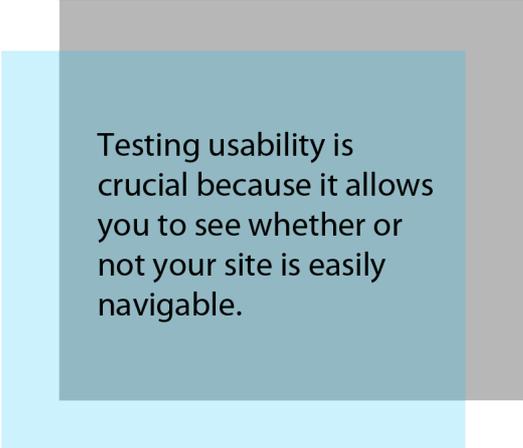
Also, when designing your site and its pages, you are going to want to make it searchable by search engines. You will want to put in key words that users are searching for. We will discuss this in a later chapter, but the keywords are important when designing your web page.

2.3.2 Testing Your Site

Once you have completed your site and have it established on the web, you are going to want it tested. The first thing you should test for is to make sure the site shows up in multiple browsers. This includes popular browsers such as

- Internet Explorer
- Google Chrome
- Mozilla Firefox
- Safari
- Opera

The reason you want your site to work in all of these browsers is so you can reach a wider audience of readership. It will allow your site's presence to be more widely known and is also beneficial in the cases where one browser is not working or is shut down.



Testing usability is crucial because it allows you to see whether or not your site is easily navigable.

Another way to test your site's usability is to have the site test driven by multiple users. You should not need more than five users for this type of test, and it can be as simple as getting some friends to help you out.

Testing usability is crucial because it allows you to see whether or not your site is easily navigable. You will want to get between two and five users ready at a computer. Give them a task, such as finding certain types of information within the website. Once you have given them these tasks, leave the room before they even open a browser. This is absolutely crucial because you will want to make sure that users are able to find the site on their own. It is also crucial because you will not be tempted to give them hints or make comments about why you designed something a certain way. The entire process of finding information is in the hands of the user, and this test will help determine whether or not you have created searchable, scannable information.

Once this is done, ask the testers if they were able to complete the tasks. Also ask them for suggestions on how to make tasks easier to accomplish, or if there was anything distracting on the page. These points of information are important and should be used to redesign the site if you need to. Repeat this process until you have a site that is easy to navigate.

2.3.3 Getting Noticed

So now you have a website that is established on the Internet, and you have repeatedly tested it for navigability. The only thing left to do is to get your website noticed. More importantly, you are going to want to get your company, or even a particular product, noticed to users of the Internet.

First, let us discuss the how to use search engines to get yourself noticed. Once the site is ready, submit the site to popular search engines, including Yahoo!, Google, or Bing. This will allow the site to be visible when people search for you, and it will also raise awareness of your site. In some instances, you can pay to have your site be listed at the top.

Another way of getting your website noticed is by creating content with searchable and commonly used keywords. We will discuss this in a later chapter on Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

Do you have friends and business partners that are on the Internet? Ask them to link your site to theirs. This will increase your visibility significantly, especially if you've practiced good networking with other companies and colleagues.

A less obvious way to get your website noticed is to do offline advertising. Though an offline marketing strategy may not be as cost effective, planning your online and offline marketing strategies together is highly beneficial, especially if you want your website to become noticed. Promoting it by word-of-mouth or even advertisements in a newspaper or brochure can start bringing in traffic to your website. Do not underestimate offline marketing. You will likely need it in the future as well.

Social media is also going to be a major player in getting your website noticed. Read on to the proceeding chapter to learn more about the role it will play in your Internet marketing strategy.

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3 Social Media and Content Marketing

3.1 Introduction

Marketing your brand is not limited to simply having a website up and running. It involves making your company, as well as your product or service, a visible presence on the Internet. If you do not reach out to the people you want to sell to, what are the chances that those people will come to you? Establishing yourself on the web means that your competition has grown to a global scale. As part of your Internet marketing strategy, you need to find a way to compete and make yourself different from the rest of the market. Your job now is to keep up with the competition and create customer relationships.

So how can you do this?

Social media is probably the most important outlet to establish your company’s presence. Not only does it make your company more visible, it allows content to be shared and provides tools to optimize your product. Content marketing is another way to make your presence known. Content marketing, which goes by many different names, is an umbrella term for marketing involving the creation of content to increase your ability to influence a consumer’s opinion on your product.

Your Internet marketing strategy should implement both of these types of marketing to great effect. We shall discuss marketing with social media and content marketing in greater detail in the following sections.

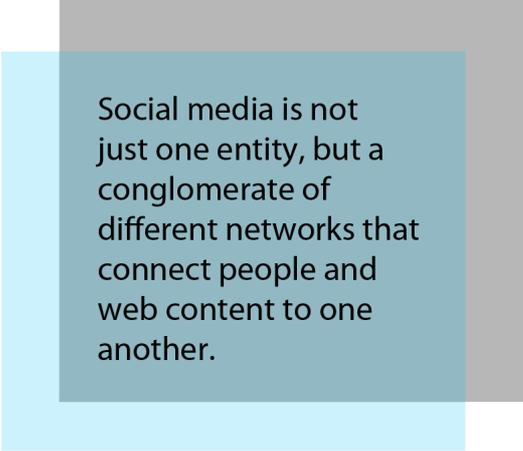


Figure 2 - Social Media Optimization

Source: Spssoftglobal.com

3.2 Marketing with Social Media

If you spend any amount of time on the Internet, chances are you are part of a social media network. Even if you do not have a Twitter or Facebook account, the content you view on the web was likely spread through social media.



Social media is not just one entity, but a conglomerate of different networks that connect people and web content to one another.

Social media is simply enormous. No matter where your searches and interests take you, you will likely end up on sites with links to “like” an article, or a “tweet” button to share a web page. Social media is not just one entity, but a conglomerate of different networks that connect people and web content to one another, as shown in Figure 2. More than just a way of sharing entertainment with the world, social media is a valuable marketing tool that, when done correctly, can increase your own company’s presence as well as the brand you want to sell.

Let’s discuss the ways to utilize social media

3.2.1 Why Use Social Media?

In Internet marketing, it is especially beneficial to use social media as a marketing tool. Social media sites and tools are used by everyone and, as a company, you do not want to fall behind on the times. There are four reasons to use social media as a marketing tool: communication, education, collaboration, and entertainment. Let us look at each of these in more detail.

- **Communication** – Using social media is all about communicating with customers and establishing a relationship with them. With a vast array of social media sites, there are now many different ways to communicate directly with many customers. What is most important is that communication between you and the user occurs. But remember, communication cannot happen unless you initiate the conversation. Simply having a site up and running will do you no good unless you make people aware of it. Search engines alone cannot be the only ones to make you more visible. Use social media and reach out to your customers. Social networking sites allow you to be a proactive communicator. They also allow customers to easily find you.

- **Education** – When we say ‘education,’ we mean more than the standard academic meaning. In online marketing, you want users to know who you are and what it is you do. You also want them to know what it is you are selling and why exactly your customer needs to buy it. Educate them about all of this by using social media sites and tools. Since social media allows more direct communication with users, you should use the opportunity to create effective content to educate them. You will want to make sure, though, that what you are saying is worth their time and that the format is appropriate. Will you use video, blogging, or pictures to educate your prospective customers? We will discuss this in more detail in a later section of this chapter.
- **Collaboration** – If there is one thing that is unique about the Internet and social media, it is the ability for multiple sites and tools to collaborate with one another. As we stated in the introduction of this ebook, the Internet is an entirely different medium from other media like print or television. The ability to use different formats to collaborate with each other is what separates the Internet as a marketing medium. If you have a weekly blog that you maintain, you can embed videos on the page to complement the written material. Perhaps you have a popular article that can be shared on social media networks with the click of a link button. Social media is about connections, but it is the collaboration that makes these connections work. When you collaborate with different formats, you want to make sure that the collaborations make sense.
- **Entertainment** – Depending on the type of company image you want to promote or the product you are trying to sell, this may come as a secondary item of interest. Creating something such as a video or blog that is meant to entertain does have its benefits. Entertainment can create interest in your company or the product you are trying to sell. But first, think about the kind of reputation you want people to know you for. What kind of company are you? If you are running a website for a hospital, you are not going to have the same values in entertainment as a website dedicated to the newest trends in music. You are going to want to keep an appropriate tone and image, so keep these things in mind if entertainment is an option for your Internet marketing strategy.

Remember, these are not necessarily rules to follow, but guidelines to look at when thinking about how to best design your Internet marketing strategy. You will have to design your strategy and utilize different tools based on your company and the product you are attempting to sell. What is appropriate for one company may not necessarily be appropriate for another company. We will discuss the different types of social media you can use further in a later section.

3.2.2 Social Media Optimization (SEO)

Utilizing social media as part of your internet marketing strategy is absolutely a must. More than just a fad, social media networks and tools can be optimized to increase your company’s presence on the internet and engage your viewers in your brand.

There are 5 rules to SEO: Creating shareable content, simplifying sharing, rewarding engagement, proactive sharing of content, and encouraging mashup.

Social Media Optimization (SEO) is a term used to describe how best to use networks and tools of social media to increase a company's Internet presence. There are 5 rules to SEO: Creating shareable content, simplifying sharing, rewarding engagement, proactive sharing of content, and encouraging mashup. Let's take a closer look at each of these rules.

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- **Creating Shareable Content** – Linkability is the first step to creating shareable content. It provides access to your website and the content you produce about your company and product. Linkability is done by having specific link buttons added to the webpage of your content. However, you'll want to do more than simply provide linkability to your site. The content itself is what is going to create buzz and interest in the product, and even your company. Whether your customers like it, share it, or dig it, it is the quality of your content that will increase traffic and the presence of your product and company.
- **Simplifying Sharing** – This rule is a sort of extension of the previous rule. While providing linkability and shareable content to your company and product, you do not want the potential consumer to feel overwhelmed by a vast array of button links across a webpage. There are multiple ways that a user is able to share content, whether it is embedding video, creating a hashtag, or simply posting the content's link. Simplifying the way a user shares content involves making the process effortless and less time-consuming. After all, your customer's time is valuable, and he will appreciate your content more if it is easily shareable.
- **Rewarding Engagement** – Engaging user conversation is important when you want to create interest in your company or product. This can occur in many different formats, from forums to posting shareable content. Though there are many different ways to measure how users engage in conversation, what matters is that it occurs. It creates interest, and you will want to make this interest worth it by rewarding users, such as with more content. Be careful with how much you give, though, and moderate rewarding engagement. You do not want to overwhelm or underwhelm users. Lastly, you will want the engagement to be positive for the long term prospects of your company or product.
- **Proactive Sharing of Content** – Not only do you want to encourage users to share your content, but you will have to take part in this sharing process as well. Be proactive in the Internet's social media market by posting different versions of a certain kind of content to multiple social media outlets. Do you have pictures of your new and improved product? Do you have videos showing how it works, or videos showing people using and enjoying the product? How about a review from a highly respected company praising your product? All of these can and should be posted out there by you and to multiple social media outlets. If you proactively share your content, chances are you will share content with users that will want to also share with other people. This is a great way to increase your visibility exponentially.
- **Encouraging Mashup** – What is a mashup, anyway? A mashup consists of users taking original content and adding in their own content, creating something new that can be shared with the world. You will want users to recreate and remix content within reason, but it is a great method to get users to share. It is also a useful method because it gives the user a voice as well as the feeling of being part of the company or the product. In recent years, companies have held contests involving user generated content such as videos or pictures. The purpose of the contests is to get consumers involved in the product and spread the visibility of the product. And of course, one or more people are usually rewarded as winners.

All of these are effective rules to abide by. One last thing to remember, though, is that when you put your Internet marketing strategy to work and start using social media sites, try to let go of control. This may sound counterproductive to your goals, but remember, it is all about the user and his time. Users on the Internet are not sitting around waiting to be a captive audience. Give them a reason to want what you are selling and let them take some control of it. Of course, there should be some moderation between complete freedom of conversation and steering the conversation in your favor.

It may take time, but social media offers a dynamic network of sites and tools that require learning at all times. Even the most savvy Internet users must constantly learn how to work social media tools and make them work in conjunction with each other.

3.2.3 The Different Kinds of Social Media

So far, we have talked about *how* to utilize social media to optimal effect. Now let us focus on the different kinds of sites and tools that you can use to create an effective Internet marketing strategy. Like we stated in an earlier section of this chapter, the kinds of social media tools you use are entirely dependent on the type of company and product that you are trying to sell. What works for one company may not necessarily work for another company. Here are some of the different social media tools and sites you can use:

- Social Networks
- Social Sharing Services
- Multimedia
- Blogs

So let us take a closer look at the different kinds of media that your company could potentially use to sell a product. We shall also look at how you may want to implement these types of tools into your Internet marketing strategy. Keep in mind as you are reading, however, that some social media tools and sites are not necessarily only one type of tool. They are fluid, and can feature multiple tools for social media use.

- Social Networks – Social networks are a great way to establish your company's presence without the use of a website. Though your website is still essential, you will want your company to have its own page on a social networking site so that customers and potential customers can more easily search for and find you. Social networks are the most common and well known social media type on the web and many people use them. Some social network sites are more tailored to a certain set of people, such as LinkedIn, which is a professional networking site. You will not necessarily have to worry about age groups because so many different age groups use different networking sites, especially Facebook. Social networks also allow collaboration of different types of social media by sharing links, videos, and pictures, and by allowing forums for discussion.

So let's say that you've established your company on a social networking site. What now? First, you will want to post information about your company, including things like your company's mission statement and contact information. Be sure to post the link to your website as well. After all, if potential customers are interested, they will want to go to the website for more information. Post information about your products and talk about why you are superior to the competition. Most importantly, open up a forum for discussion. This will allow you to analyze your customer's needs and values, and it will also allow you and customers to engage in conversation.

Once you have things up and running, be sure to periodically post new content, such as a periodic blog or pictures of new products. Remember, you want your customers to stay interested, so giving them a taste of new content works in your favor. After all, the Internet is full of other distractions. Don't lose users' attention by being unresponsive.

- **Social Sharing Services** – These types of sites allow users to create a profile just like a social networking site. The biggest difference is that these types of sites allow quick and efficient sharing of content on the Internet, and the content that you share can be seen by others who can see your account. This type of social media tool is very beneficial because it is quick and it can potentially spread some kind of content around the Internet. Some popular sites include Twitter, Stumbleupon, and Delicious. Let's say that you have received good feedback from a website that does reviews on the type of product that you sell. If they have written an article that praises your product (or better yet, your company!), you can share this news with all of your customers using one of these sites.

Another term that is often used in reference to social sharing services is called "bookmarking." This term refers to the ability to share and save content on the Internet. You may also see bookmarking link buttons at the bottom of certain webpages, allowing users to bookmark the page. This is very useful for users because it is efficient and can spread the content much more quickly across the Internet. You may want to use these types of links on your website, especially if you have a periodic blog or pages that showcase your product.

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- **Multimedia** – Multimedia refers to many types of formats on the Internet. The Internet is more than just putting words on a webpage. Surfing the Internet is an entirely visual experience, and you should make sure that content goes beyond words. So what kinds of multimedia are we talking about?

Pictures and videos are, by far, an integral part of the visual experience of websites. Sites such as Youtube offer a place to upload videos. These sites also allow videos to be embedded and shared on other websites, like on a blog post or webpage. There are also other sites that allow pictures to be shared and uploaded, like Flickr. The sites serve as a repository for photos to be viewed by other people, and they also feature certain tools to create slideshows and presentations with your photos. Both video and photo sharing sites are a great way to bring a visually appealing aspect to your website and even your social networking profile. While offering visual content gets users to be more attentive to your site or social profile, the other important aspect is that they compliment written content. You should have both visual and written content that work with each other, and not simply one or the other.

Let's say you only have written content. While informative, your customers' time is important and they may not want to read so much. Put in a supplemental video to watch and listen to, or even a picture. This way, your content can be viewed in many ways and appeal to a broader range of audience. Now let's say you only have visual content. While visually appealing, it may not necessarily offer substance to your product or company. Additionally, some people may prefer a written version of your content, so be sure to have something people can read.

- **Blogs** – There are thousands of sites dedicated to blogs and even vlogs (video blogs). Blogs are a good method for publishing new content periodically. They can be seen as the electronic version of a company's newsletter, and even as a kind of journal. They provide updates on the company or product, news, and previews of new products coming out soon. As part of your website or social networking profile, it is a good idea to maintain a blog. After all, you want to keep the attention of your customers with new content. You also want to be able to gain new customers by giving them a reason to look at your blog. Do not let the competition share information or knowledge that makes them look like the better expert than your company. Know your customers and give them something more than the competition.

As stated in the previous bullet point, you should have both visual and written content that works together, and not simply one or the other. Your blog should have written content, but be sure to provide some visual appeal with pictures or videos. The amount you put in should be modest, so try to limit your videos to one per blog post. With pictures, depending on the length, there should be no more than one for every two paragraphs.

As a general rule, it is best to stick to the social media sites and tools that are most popular with everyday consumers. These are the websites that are most visited and the tools that are most often used, so it never hurts to use them. But again, your use of social media in your Internet marketing strategy is entirely dependent on the type of company and product you want to sell. It is also dependent on your target demographic, so that is why researching your customers is essential to your use of social media. We will discuss this in a later chapter.

Now, we shall discuss another type of marketing closely related to social media marketing.

3.3 Content Marketing

Content marketing is a kind of marketing that has been around since before the Internet. The term can go by many different names but they all mean the same thing. Content marketing can be described as marketing involving the creation of content to increase your influence of a consumer's opinion on your product. Essentially, it is marketing geared towards improving the quality and development of your message through different media. The different types of media can range from the Internet to the radio. For this ebook, we will stick to the digital medium, including the Internet.



Content marketing can be described as marketing involving the creation of content to increase your influence on the consumer's opinion of your product.

Let us take a closer look at content marketing and how to implement it into your Internet marketing strategy.

3.3.1 The Five Components of Content Marketing

We can break down content marketing into five major components. The five components are:

- Editorial-Based
- Marketing-Backed
- Behavior-Driven
- Multimedia
- Targeted

Let's have a look at each of these:

- Editorial-Based – This means that the content you publish about your company or product is in long form and tells the reader relevant information. The written content must also have some value to it, or else you will not be able to hold the attention of your readers. It must be informative, but entertaining enough to allow your readers to want to continue reading. The content should also be educational so that it can be viewed with merit. Ask yourself, is this worth reading? Is it valuable information? Are these claims true? Put yourself in the shoes of your audience, and give them what they want and need to hear.

- **Marketing Backed** – Companies have underlying sales and marketing objectives that they support with sales copy designed to drive a sale. Ultimately, any association wants to create new business through its content. The content, again, must be true and valuable. It should explain the benefits to the consumer that your products and services provide.
- **Behavior-Driven** – This means that content marketing seeks to change the opinion of a customer and prospective consumer. You want potential customers to know that what you are selling is better than the competition and that it meets all the claims you make about it. The best way to alter a person’s opinion is to have a superior product in the first place. However, a person’s opinion of a product goes beyond the product itself. It extends to what you or someone else has to say about the product and even your company. Words matter, and on the Internet, whatever a person says never really goes away.
- **Multi-Platform** – How many different forms of media are you using to market your product? Just as you should use different social media tools, you should also use different media formats to fully advertise your company and the product you are trying to sell. Use video, the written word, pictures, audio, or television ads. Your marketing will spread quick and across a wider audience range by using multiple media platforms.
- **Targeted** – Your marketing should be targeted towards a particular demographic. Name your demographic, or even your ideal customer. If you do, you can perform a content marketing strategy. If you cannot, however, you will not be able to successfully create a good content marketing strategy. Marketing requires knowledge of your customers, and if you do not know who they are, this can reflect poorly in the execution of your marketing strategy as well as the reputation of your company.

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On the Internet, and especially with social media networks and tools, the values of potential customers have changed dramatically. Consumers expect to see no gimmicks, to find valuable content, and they are more informed in general due to the Internet. Content marketing is a benefit for marketers and companies because they can earn more merit from their content, they can gain valued customers, they can separate themselves from the competition, and they can use technology to educate.

In the age of the Internet as a dominant marketing force, expect consumers to be doubtful of certain products. The Internet is full of information, some true and some misleading. Your job will be to educate people and provide them with knowledge. True information is valued more than ever before, so be sure to use it and get consumers to trust you.

So far, we have discussed what content marketing is. Now, how do we use it? Social media is the answer, but we must keep in mind offline media as well. Digital formats will be the focus of content marketing in this ebook, so let us see what these different media have to offer.

3.3.2 How to Use Content Marketing in Social Media

With the Internet, content is more than just creating something that is elegantly written or making a video in high resolution. Content marketing on the web means you must use different outlets and different means to get a message across. The boundaries of the ways to get content to your audience have decreased with the Internet. Still, your content must be appropriate to your message and the reputation of your company.

More importantly, your content must conform to the social media platform or tool that you decide on using to get your message across. Before we get into the ways content is created and perceived, let's begin by thinking about how the buying process goes for a consumer.



Your content must conform to the social media platform or tool that you decide on using to get your message across.

A consumer may start his buying process by shopping online and researching products through the Internet. They may read reviews on certain websites from certified experts, or they may read what casual Internet users have to say about your company or product.

This process of researching is actually tough for market analysts to observe because there is no definite, measurable way to analyze it. What we do know, though, is that however a consumer buys a product, social media was a part of the decision making and shopping process.

There are three steps to implementing content marketing into social media. They are:

- Creation
- Distribution
- Engagement

The creation step is the step where you are most involved. The content is not going to make itself, so be prepared to take that initial step! However, creation is also in the users' hands as well, in the form of user generated content like reviews. The distribution and engagement steps are the steps where control of the content is gradually transferred to the users. While you should also participate in distribution and engagement, the collective efforts of Internet users are going to do the bulk of the marketing work. Let us take a closer look at each of these steps.

- **Creation** – By far, this is the most crucial step in initiating content marketing in social media. This step includes both you and the users. You will be most involved in this step, but this step and all proceeding steps can be broken down into two categories: the company and users.

Company – To get your image and your content out there, you must first create it. You have already done so by establishing a website and social networking profile. This content is appropriated based on whatever social networking site you use, as well as the website. The content may include things like comments, videos, and photos to showcase what you are selling or articles talking about how to use the product or discussing topics relevant to people who would use your products or services. The content you use in other kinds of social media tools is also dependent on your company and the product you are selling. You may not use the same types of tools that someone else uses, but if you do, it must be appropriate. .

Users – Users are another factor in this step, and they have complete freedom to create content and say whatever they want. If you have a superior product in the first place, you will not have to worry too much about this. Still, you should provide superior customer service to respond to negative feedback in case something bad happens with your product. It will serve as a kind of safety net, but do not count on it completely. Ultimately, the image you show to your customers is reflected in the content they generate, so serving their needs and creating good products and content in the first place is a must. They can make blogs and reviews about your product, and these can be read by millions of other people. Remember, what is said on the Internet can stay on the Internet indefinitely.

- **Distribution** – Again, this step involves both the company and users to participate in. While you will be doing work involving setting up advertisements, writing up blogs, or creating a video, users will also be at work distributing content of yours and their own.

Company – Depending on the type of social media tool you use, you will be distributing content in unique ways that are different from users. For videos, you might be creating an advertisement or creating a video tutorial to place on your website or blog. A weekly podcast might be introduced through a site or program that allows users to purchase and download the podcast. Social networks are where the majority of content is distributed. You might see photos of new products posted to a Facebook wall, or presentations sent out over email.

Users – Users distribute content in much the same ways as a company. The biggest difference is that content may not necessarily be their own. Whereas companies distribute their own content, users will distribute content that they generate in addition to a company’s content. They will use social network sites to share links, videos and photos. Their content is also distributed for others to see on review websites, which in turn may also be shared. Sharing, bookmarking, tagging, liking, and tweeting are just some of the ways that users distribute any type of content.

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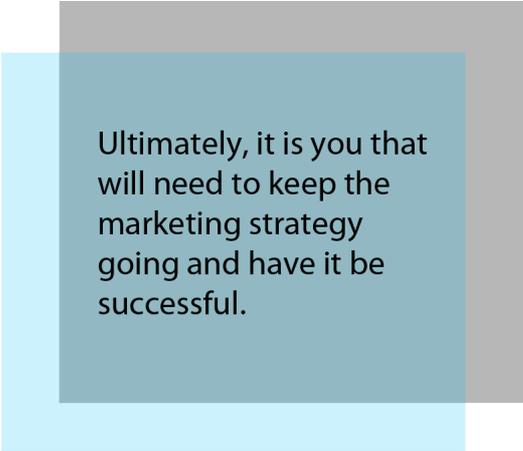
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- **Engagement** – By this step, users have taken a majority of control over content marketing. You, as a company, we still be part of this step in the form of responding to feedback and improving your product and company based on the desires of your consumers. Be sure to participate in this part of the process because it will reflect well on your company's image and reputation.

Company – Though you will not be as much of a participant in this step, you will still want to engage in the conversation and keep it going. This could take the form of Facebook comments or posts on forums. This could also take the form of a video addressing concerns and issues with a recent product, or future plans that your company plans on implementing. Be sure that whatever the case, the content of these social media tools is relevant to your users and that it is something they will want to hear.

Users – If the creation and distribution of your content and user generated content has created conversation in your company or product, you have very likely created interest in both of them. They will also engage in conversation in the form of comments, wall posts, and forum posts. Secondly, if your product has created enough interest, it will go beyond the Internet and people will start to talk about your product with others.

When going through these steps of the process of content marketing, remember that your content must be relevant and valuable for the users. The whole concept of content marketing within social media depends on both the company and the user. Both parties must continue the process for your Internet marketing strategy to be successful.



Ultimately, it is you that will need to keep the marketing strategy going and have it be successful.

Ultimately, however, it is you that will need to keep the marketing strategy going and if it is to be successful. If you do not engage in conversation, distribute content correctly, or create anything new to keep your customer's interest in your company or product, you will lose them as customers. After all, they are the ones that will keep your company in business, and they are the ones you want to establish a relationship with. Conforming to the norms of social media and keeping the conversation going will ensure lasting and maximized relationships.

4 Search Engine Marketing

4.1 Introduction

So far, we have discussed how to make your company more visible online using social media, content marketing, and creating a website. These are fine forms of marketing and are crucial to the success of your Internet marketing strategy.



Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is a term that refers to increasing your web presence through the use of keywords and searchability.

We will now turn to a different form of marketing that is another essential to the success of your strategy. Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is a term that refers to increasing your web presence through the use of keywords and searchability. There are different ways that a company can go about using SEM and there are some important elements to keep in mind when starting this type of marketing.

The term Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is also a term that can be used interchangeably with SEM, but there is a difference in meaning between the two. While SEM may refer to improving your presence through organic, or free, listings on a search engine, it also refers to paying for an advertisement on a search engine or using pay-per-click or cost-per-click advertising. SEO, on the other hand, refers only to organic listings through a search engine. While being the most cost effective means to increasing your web presence, it is also the most preferred way. The following sections will discuss the different methods to perform SEM and what the differences are between the methods. Because of the importance of SEO, we will mostly discuss this type of SEM.

4.2 Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

As we stated before, SEO is the most cost effective and preferred way to increase your presence on the web. The reason SEO is so preferred is that it costs virtually nothing to perform. Unlike paid advertising, you are optimizing the content and searchability of your website or social media outlet profile to get prospective customers to find you.

The most important and basic components to SEO in your Internet marketing strategy are keywords and keyword phrases.

The most important and basic components to SEO in your Internet marketing strategy are keywords and keyword phrases. These are the backbone of SEO and understanding them is essential to starting to implement SEO.

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4.2.1 Basics of the Keyword and Keyword Phrases

Before implementing SEO, let us discuss the basics of the keyword and keyword phrases. For simplification, we will refer to keywords and keyword phrases as simply keywords. What exactly are keywords? A keyword is a search term that a user might type into a search engine to find a website. For example, if you sell weight loss supplements, some of your keywords could include:

- Weight Loss
- Lose Weight
- Weight Loss Supplements
- Nutrition Supplements
- Diet Pills
- Diet Supplements
- Weight Loss Pills
- Weight Loss Powder

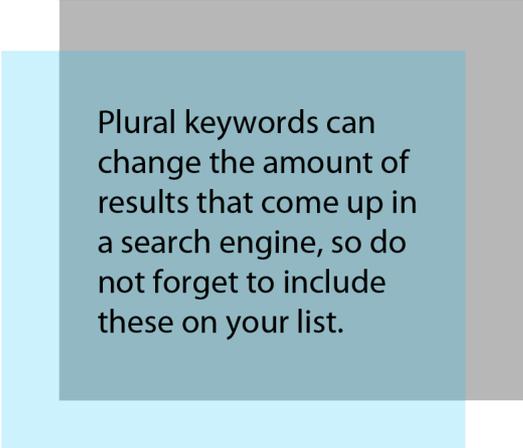
As you can see here, there are many different keywords that a user might type in for the same type of product. You will want to keep this in mind when determining the different kinds of keywords to put into the content of your website, as we will discuss in a later section.

Keywords can range from single words to long phrases, and you will want to be prepared to think of all the different types of keywords possible that are likely to be searched for by users. It is important to keep in mind that you can never have too many keywords as long as they are relevant to your company and the product you are trying to sell.

4.2.2 Determining Your Keywords

This will be an important part of your SEO strategy and will require effort on you and your team's part. However, there are also free and paid resources on the Internet that can help you even further in fully optimizing your strategy. Do not forget to fully exploit these resources.

First, you are going to want to sit down and think of the most obvious keywords that people will type into a search engine. Think about what your customers are looking for and how they would phrase their search. Remember, your keywords must be relevant to the company and the product you are selling.



Plural keywords can change the amount of results that come up in a search engine, so do not forget to include these on your list.

As you come up with different keywords, try to expand them into longer phrases or keywords you may not necessarily think of first. Give nouns certain descriptors that narrow down a particular kind of product. This will help you figure out and understand the less obvious keywords that you may have otherwise missed.

Another helpful tip is to pluralize keywords that you have already come up with. Plural keywords can change the amount of results that come up in a search engine, so do not forget to include these on your list.

Now that you have an exhaustive list of keywords at your disposal, this would be a good time to use a keyword generating resource to come up with even more. There are many different keyword generating tools to use, including

- Google Adwords
- Micro Niche Finder
- Wordtracker
- Wordstream Keyword Analyzer

Of course, there are many other keyword generating tools out there, but they all operate on the same principle. If you type in a basic keyword, the tool will analyze what has been searched on the web that is related to the keyword. This is very useful because it will generate keywords that you may not have thought of. It will also tell you certain information about the keywords such as:

- The rate of competition for showing up in the results when someone searches with that keyword
- The number of global monthly searches that are made using that keyword
- The number of local monthly searches for that keyword

When deciding on which keyword generating tool to use, keep in mind whether or not the service is free or requires a fee. This matters when taking your company's budget into consideration. Of course, there is nothing wrong with using a free service, but be sure to research how useful a particular tool is before using it.

4.2.3 Placing Your Keywords

This section will explain how to best place your keywords throughout your site and the social media outlets that you may have used. First, we will explain the different types of SEO there are and how important it is to use both.

- **On Page** – This refers to SEO that is used within your company’s website. This type of SEO uses keywords to help improve its ranking within search engines. Keywords are placed strategically in different spots, like your content or your web pages’ titles. SEO of this type is important because it gets people to come directly to your site.
- **Off Page** – This refers to SEO that is strategically placed outside of the company’s website. This could include social media outlets, blog posts, written articles, etc. Backlinks are what make up this type of SEO, and this is highly considered the most important kind of SEO. SEO of this type if important as well because it gets people to find your site through multiple outlets.

You will want to focus on both On Page and Off Page types of SEO. Receiving traffic, or the amount of visitors to your site, will boost your rankings within results of search engines. Using both types of SEO will help you do just that. Let’s take a closer look at how to strategically place your keywords.

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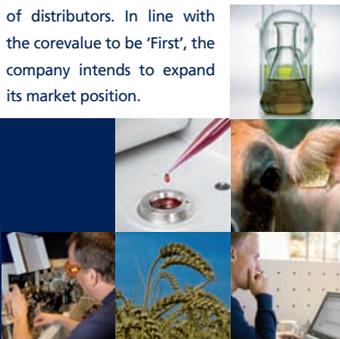
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On Page SEO

There is no perfect way of placing keywords of this kind onto your website, but if you have planned out all possible keywords, you will be ready to start the process. Keep in mind, though, that the process is a constant test, so you will need to be ready to change things if you find a better way to maximize your particular site's optimization.

- **Title** – The title of a web page is one of the most pertinent places to put a keyword. In fact, one study showed that placing the keyword in the title yields higher search results. Consider using the most searched for term. If the page refers to something more specific, consider using the most searched for term of that type.
- **<META> Tags** - Web pages are built using Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML), which is full of different commands that execute what you see when you load the page in your web browser. When designing your webpage, you want to be sure that your keywords are used in your <META> tags. Using these helps improve click-through rates, increasing traffic to your site.
- **URL** – Keywords appearing in a page's URL tend to perform better when users search for them. Also be sure to shorten the length of your page's URL by reducing the amount of subpages in your website. For example, the URL "website.com/keyword" would do better in search results than "website.com/folder/subfolder/keyword." Hyphens should also be used for keywords, but not the domain names.
- **Content** – Your keywords should be spread out into the content of your site's pages. Keep in mind, however, that you want to use them strategically by making the flow of the content sound natural. Bundling up random keywords at the bottom of the page will do no good. Remember, consumers expect no gimmicks and are searching for information. They will immediately be turned off from the site if you employ this type of strategy.

Be sure to vary the frequency at which you use the keywords as well as different variations of the keywords. You can also have keywords appear in the section titles of pages, though this does not improve rankings as much as URL and domain keywords. It will not hurt your site's ranking to do so, but be sure it sounds natural.

One more thing that is important when employing keywords in your content is to have keywords appear towards the top of a page. This will yield higher results from search engines and will help users identify whether the page is likely to have the content they are looking for. If the search result is out of context for the reader, he may not be interested in looking at your website.

- **<ALT> Tags** – <ALT> tags are the descriptors of images that show up in a browser. The <ALT> tag is shown if the image itself is not successfully loaded, but it is a valuable tool to use to improve information on your site and for search engines to look for. This is one of the most highly advised tools to use, so be sure you use a relevant image and at least one keyword in the tag to maximize the tag's use.

- **On Page Links** – This plays an important role in your keyword usage when you provide links to other pages on your site and even other websites. Use keywords in the links as they appear on the page. Instead of having a link that says “Click Here,” instead have a keyword as the link that still sounds natural.

Off Page SEO

Performing this type of SEO will require more work for you and your team, but the effort is well worth it. This kind of SEO extends beyond your website and into other outlets, like social media or blog posting sites. Successfully implementing this strategy will help boost your site’s rankings and help propel your site to the top of search engine results. Let’s take a closer look at how to do this.

- **Social Media Sites** – In Chapter 3, we discussed how your Internet marketing strategy should use social media outlets to further enhance your presence on the web. The marketing strategy should also use SEO as part of the plan. The benefit of using these types of sites is that you already have an audience that is aware of your company and the product you want to sell. Employ keywords into the profiles that you have created on these sites and link between the two. This will help your rankings tremendously, so having both the site and your profiles working in conjunction is highly recommended.
- **Article Directories** – Writing and posting articles for certified sites is another practice to consider if you want to expand the traffic to your site. There are many websites on the Internet dedicated to posting well written and researched articles for informational purposes. Consider becoming a part of this community by writing a few of your own and linking between them. This establishes credibility and increases awareness of your company and brand. Remember to add in keywords as well.
- **Blog Posts** – Creating and writing a blog adds another space for your company on the Internet. Companies employ this tool to provide customers with up to date information on a regular basis, while creating an interactive environment for users. Again, linking between your blog and your website is a must and using keywords in your blog posts is essential.
- **Video Sites** – Sites dedicated to storing videos are another good option to employing off page SEO. Using these sites is beneficial because you can store videos without having to sacrifice space on your own server. Additionally, your bandwidth is not taken up. Linking between the video site and your website is a good idea, but consider also embedding the video on your site if bandwidth allows. As always, use strong keywords to maximize search results from users.
- **Commenting on Forums** – Not only can you comment on forums, but you can comment on social media sites in the form of wall posts and tweets. You can also comment on other’s blog posts. This kind of SEO marketing is much more frequent, but very beneficial in practice. You can use keywords in your comments and provide links to your social media profile and website.

4.3 Additional Kinds of SEM

For the majority of this chapter, we have discussed SEO as a major component to SEM. Certainly, SEO is very beneficial because of how cost effective it is. After all, it is free if you use the right tools and proper techniques.

We will now turn over to additional kinds of SEM techniques that you can use in your Internet marketing strategy. These SEM techniques will require more advanced knowledge, more application of software, and more investment.

4.3.1 Advertising on Other Websites

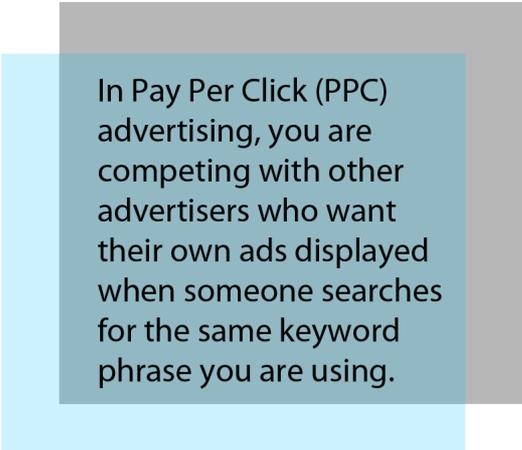
If you look at some websites, they will have banners on the top, bottom, and/or sides of the pages. This is one way of investing some capital into advertising. It is one way of bringing in traffic to your own company's website. To do this, find a link on the website that says "Advertise with Us" or "About Us."

Ads on another website can vary widely in price. Some of the factors that will affect what you pay include:

- The size of the ad you choose - the larger the ad, the more expensive it will be
- The location on the page where you want your ad displayed - ads at the top of the page will cost more than ads at the bottom
- The amount of traffic that the website receives - the more popular the website, so the more people that will see your ad, the more you will need to pay for that ad
- The competition for ad space on that site - the more people that want to have an ad on that site, the more you will need to pay for that ad
- The percentage of the time that you want your ad to appear - your ad won't necessarily appear every time that the site is loaded by a visitor. Instead, you can pay less if your ad "rotates" in display with other ads

Before you invest in advertising on another website, you should research the kind of demographic the website brings in. If you are considering advertising with them, keep in contact and ask them questions. This information will be valuable.

4.3.2 Pay-Per-Click Advertising



In Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising, you are competing with other advertisers who want their own ads displayed when someone searches for the same keyword phrase you are using.

When you want to only pay for Internet advertising that gets a response - a “click” - you want Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising. In this case, you are usually talking about text ads that appear to the right of search engine results or on websites that have monetized their sites by allowing advertisers to place ads on the site that the advertiser believes that site’s customers will be interested in. This is different from purchasing ad space directly from the website because instead you are allowing the advertiser to choose which site(s) your ad should be shown on.

The most commonly discussed form of PPC advertising is Google AdWords, though similar programs exist on all the major search engines. In these types of advertising, you are competing with other advertisers for keyword-based ads based on what you are willing to pay to have your ad shown first.

To explain this more clearly, let’s go back to the weight loss supplements example we used earlier in the ebook. Imagine that you want to write an ad on Google that will display to the right of the search results when someone searches for “weight loss supplements.”

In order for your ad to appear, you need to be willing to pay more per click for your ad than other advertisers who want their ads to be shown when that same keyword phrase is used. This sounds simple enough, but it can actually be a complicated science to determine how much to pay per click so that you get enough traffic to your site but so that you don’t end up paying thousands of dollars for clicks that you can’t afford.

If you decide you want to experiment with PPC advertising, be sure to set a limit on the daily amount you are willing to spend. That way you won’t end up with a huge bill that you weren’t expecting and you can see how much the resulting traffic actually produces in revenue on the site before investing more money in PPC advertising.

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4.3.3 Affiliate Marketing

The final major category of Internet marketing is affiliate marketing. In affiliate marketing, you get other people to drive traffic to your site in return for a percentage of any sale that is made as a result of that visit to your site. In other words, you allow others to do part of your marketing for you. However, affiliate marketing is not suited for every product. In order for it to work, you need to have:

- A high enough profit margin that you can afford a commission for your affiliates
- An attractive product or service that other people will be motivated to promote because (a) you pay a good commission and (b) the product is relatively easy to sell
- You are able to support the demand in your product that affiliates could bring in
- You are able to support the additional customers that affiliates could bring in
- You are able to support the affiliates themselves with training, advertising, and other promotional materials
- You are willing to pay for a service (or software) to help you track your affiliate sales
- You have the time to monitor your affiliate's marketing efforts so that you know they are representing your company as you would want them to in their promotions

You can register with large affiliate “marketplaces” that help manage your affiliate programs for a fee. Some of the most popular include:

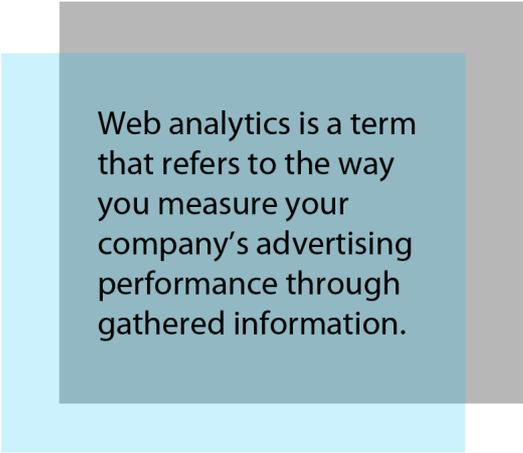
- ClickBank
- Commission Junction (CJ.com)
- PayDotCom
- AffiliateMarketplace
- Click2Sell
- PayGear

You will need to register with these sites and then people who want to be your affiliates will be able to find you. Of course, you can manage your own affiliate program, but when you are first experimenting with affiliate marketing it will probably be easier for you to use one or more of these services.

5 Web Analytics

5.1 Introduction

Up to this point, your Internet marketing strategy has employed many different techniques to bring people to your website, get involved with your company, and perhaps even buy some of your products. You've gotten off to a great start, so well done!



Web analytics is a term that refers to the way you measure your company's advertising performance through gathered information.

But your job is not done just yet. Any good Internet marketer that maintains a company's website and its social media outlets needs to make sure that his web presence is doing the most efficient job possible. That means that you want to ensure that when people come to your website, you should know what they are doing and in what ways they are using your pages.

Welcome to web analytics. Web analytics is a term that refers to the way you measure your company's advertising performance through gathered information. There is a vast array of analytic tools and software you can use that are readily available from the Internet. They measure information such as behavior patterns of visitors to a site, show you how your advertising is performing, and provide conversion rates of data.

Do not worry if any of this sounds overly complicated. It is actually quite a simple process to begin and a very valuable tool to implement. The amount of information you can gather could fill entire libraries, especially if your company's website has grown larger. Even better, you can also get a glimpse into your competition.

Let's begin by discussing how to obtain web analytics tools.

5.2 Beginning Web Analytics

The term "web analytics" may sound like something reserved for the occupation of someone in computer science. In actuality, it is a valuable tool for Internet marketers and is as simple as pasting a single, coded line into your website's source code.

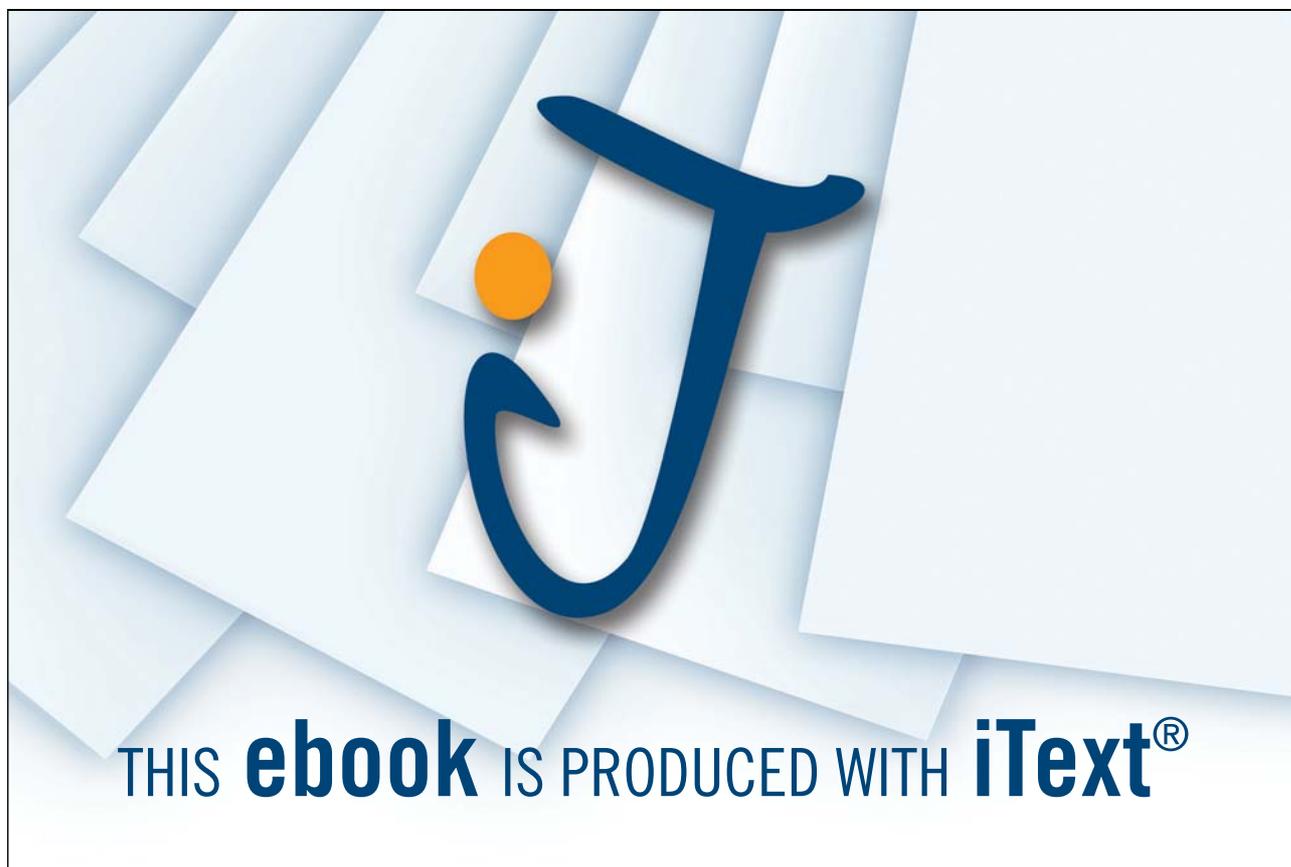
Simple, right? Implementing the tools will not be a problem in the process. Later on, we will look at how to interpret data and what you can do to improve your marketing strategy. First, let's take a look at where to begin in web analytics.

5.2.1 Where to Find Web Analytics Tools

As we mentioned before, there is a vast array of analytic tools and software you can use that are readily available from the Internet. Some are free, while others are paid services that require you pay a fee. Here are some of the more popular tools you can use:

- Google Analytics
- Yahoo! Web Analytics
- Crazy Egg
- Compete
- Google Website Optimizer
- Optimizely
- Webtrends
- Omniture
- Kissinsights
- 4Q
- Clicktale
- Facebook Insights
- Twitalyzer

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Keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list, and do not shy away from doing your own research. Find out who recommends these tools and what the prices are. While most are free, prices can range between \$9 a year to \$299 a year.

Ultimately, the tools you use are up to you. We should mention that it is never a bad idea to use multiple tools. Using more than one analytics tool will help you gather even more information and, more importantly, more specific information about certain customers. With the web becoming a more personalized user space, this is crucial information you can use to tailor your advertising, website, and social media spaces to the user.

5.2.2 Before You Start

Before you sign up for any accounts, come up with a strategy concerning what you want to accomplish with these tools. Here are a few good tips to consider for carrying out your web analytics strategy:

- Think of the data you need – Think of the information you need to know to improve your website or social media profile's performance. Are you looking for page views? Traffic? Amounts of clicks?
- Focus on what matters – When you log in at first to an analytics tool profile, you will get information about your site. There will be a lot of information, some of it being trivial. Do not get sidetracked, and focus only on what you predetermined to be important.
- Ongoing Analysis – This process of analyzing data does not stop the first time you use the tools. Check your numbers frequently and record them. You will need them for improvements and if there is ever a time to present your data to you company. Also think about contextualizing your data in the form of graphs for an easy grasp.
- Taking Action – These points of data are not just for record keeping. Remember that you are gathering them for a reason. Take action when necessary and always suggest new ways to improve your numbers.



Web analytics tools can be used by a company for both its website as well as its profiles in social media websites.

Now that you have come up with a strategy, go ahead and sign up for multiple accounts with different tools. The bulleted list in the previous section contains many tools to use when analyzing your website. Some others, however, are more specific to certain social media sites. Web analytics tools can be used by a company for both its website as well as its profiles in social media websites.

Since your Internet marketing strategy employs social media sites, it is a good idea to use tools like Facebook Insights and Twitalyzer for Facebook and Twitter, respectively. They are both free to use.

Finally, you should sign up for a website analytics account. Whether you use a free or paid service, remember to use multiple tools to gather more data. An additional option to consider is to hire someone to read and interpret the data for you.

5.3 Analytic Tool Data

When you have your code pasted into your website's source code, the web analytic tool will run the code and analyze data about the traffic you have gathered. There will be data such as page views, website visits, average number of page views per visits, etc. The different types of data could go on and on. So what does it all mean?

5.3.1 The Basic Data Points

There are a few key points of data that may immediately catch your eye on first view. Let's take a look at a few of these.

- Page Visits – This indicates the amount of sessions that occurred on your site, whether they were new or returning customers.
- Bounce Rate – This is the rate of people who visited by left immediately. If this number is high, it is not a good percentage.
- Page Views/Visit – This number indicates the average amount of page views that were requested on each session.
- Average Site Time Visit – This is the average time a visitor stayed on your website.
- Percentage of New People – This number is valuable, and measures the percentage of first time visits from new people.

Now what can we do with this data? Make sure to see what frame of time this data represents. If the amount of page visits is in the hundreds of thousands for a month, this can be good or bad depending on the company. For non-profits, it is good, but for a large business, it may not be as good as you want it to be. Having a low bounce rate (between 0% and 45%) is very good. However, do not ever expect a bounce rate to reach zero. Bounce rate could mean anything, from people finding the wrong site to people who are not interested.

Page views are a good start to seeing how well your content compels people. Even just having multiple page views is a good indication that people are finding what they are looking for. This runs in conjunction with average site time visit. If the average site time visit is around five minutes, this is also a very good number. If you think about it, this is a significant amount of time. Users' attention spans are short, so this could indicate that you have compelling content and that they found what they were looking for.

Last, but certainly not least, if you have a large percentage of new, incoming people, this is a good indication that your company's web presence is becoming more noticed.

The next thing you should do with this data is to record it. You will be reading this data constantly and you will soon be analyzing trends.

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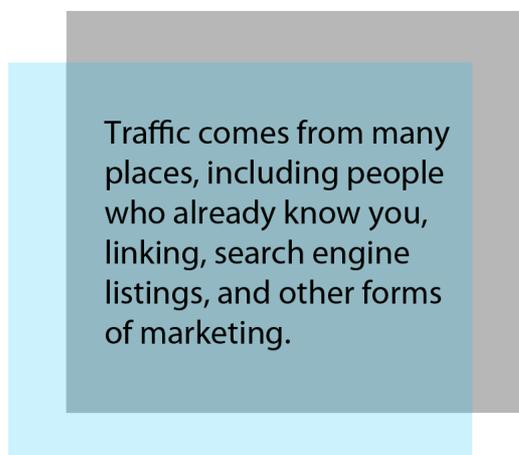
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5.3.2 Traffic Sources

Another point of data that the analytic tool will show you is where users have come from before reaching your site. This is important because it helps you see what marketing efforts or links may be the most effective. Some of these sources might include:

- Direct traffic
- Referring URLs
- Search engines
- Other



Direct traffic refers to users who went directly to your site by typing your website's URL into a web browser's address bar. These are the people that most likely already know you or have obtained the URL from some other source. This could indicate that people value your company enough to remember your website. If your URL is easy to remember, you will likely yield more traffic this way. Google.com and Amazon.com are a couple examples.

Referring URLs means that other websites have directed users your way. Referring URLs could include your own social media profiles, banner ads, or blog posts with direct links. If somebody has posted the link to your site, users that click it will be considered this kind of traffic. A high number of directed traffic indicates that your off page SEO is working.

Search Engines refers to users linking to your site from search engines like Google, Yahoo!, or Bing. This includes both organic listings and paid listings. If you have only relied on organic listings in these search engines, then this is a good indication that your ranking is improving in search engines.

Some analytic tools also have an “Other” category that refers to traffic being directed by other means, including email marketing or direct marketing. This number may not yield high traffic like the three previous types, but is still effective for adding to your customer base.

You are going to want to record these data as well and save them for the future. Again, periodically check these and keep recording to see trends. If you are already in the process of analyzing trends, look at how these trends are changing over time and adapt your marketing in response. If you are falling behind in one area, try to improve your traffic incoming from that source by advertising yourself more or improving your SEO.

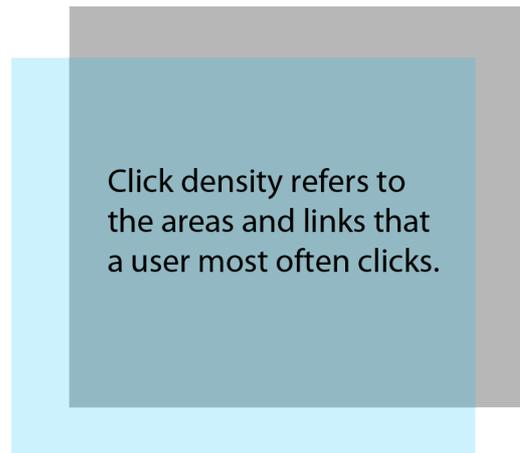
5.3.3 Using this Data to Save Money

You already have the basic data points as well as traffic data points. Let’s take a look at how to fix these things, improve your marketing, and save money.

- First, analyze the highest bounce rates of particular pages. You can also look at the keywords that people used to look for these pages. This will help you understand if your keywords are fully optimized and if people are getting what they are looking for. If the bounce rate is high, consider changing your content, or even the form of your content.
- Next, get a website optimizer such as Google’s Website Optimizer and create different versions of the same page. Try to vary these different versions as much as you can and then put them to the test. You may find that certain keywords are working better than others, or that certain content formats are unappealing and unnecessary.
- Once you find an optimal page version with the lowest bounce rate, use it. You want to do this with all pages that have a high bounce rate and you will also want to check back repeatedly to see if this decreases the bounce rate.

5.3.4 Site Overlay

This is a report that shows even more particular points of data, specifically click density. The art of understanding this data lies not only in reading and analyzing trends, but in the analyzer actually using the site himself.



Click density refers to the areas and links that a user most often clicks. The heavier the density, the greater the amount of clicks. This is a good piece of data to look at because it shows user behaviors and patterns. You can use this data to improve where you want users to focus on. Manipulate content and even the design of the site to increase clicks in a particular area.

Let's say that you have a blog post that is readily available to read. Upon analyzing the data, you see there is a small click density. As the analyzer, you go to the page where the link to this blog post is located. Are you using the right keywords? Is the link clearly visible? Is there any crowding of text that might get in the way of people seeing the link?

Put yourself in the seat of the user and think the way he thinks. If you are not catching his attention, then your blog post will have little influence because it is not being read.

5.3.5 Additional Points of Data

Finally, we will cover what might be a very important type of data for you as a business. There are a number of data points that specific website creators might look at to improve. For bloggers, the number of new and returning visitors is key. For non-profit organizations, they may be looking at the click density of links for job offers. For e-commerce, money numbers might be a key element to see how well they are doing, such as average transaction amounts, number of transactions, and number of items sold.

For e-commerce, understanding how your customers shop is essential to adapting your marketing plan. You can fine tune your site to improve click density or improve SEO of your content to entice customers to purchase more products.

Having web analytics tools at your disposal will help you analyze these data, and with the knowledge from this chapter, you can improve your traffic and the user experience of your site.

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