



E-marketing for local businesses: The growing role of local SEO

Ms. Shweta Roy,
Guest Faculty,
BIT Meshra, Patna

Abstract: Businesses can easily and consistently make their brands and products accessible to their customers using the Internet. It is extremely difficult for businesses to increase sales and market recognition because to the huge number of businesses that uses the Internet to conduct business. In this paper, we look at two methods for increasing an e-exposure business's in order to drive more visitors and sales. We outline a method for calculating the Return on Investment (ROI) from Search Engine Marketing (SEM), concentrating on the two key strategies of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Pay Per Click campaign (PPC). The investigation is conducted using data from two small and medium-sized businesses (SME).

Keywords: Return on Investment (ROI), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay Per Click campaign (PPC)

1. Introduction

With more than 3.25 million new websites being added to the Internet each month [1], e-business is expanding fast. Due to the overwhelming number of websites, it is quite challenging for a business to enhance visibility and gain a competitive edge over its competitors, which is a crucial component of sales success. Companies are spending money on search engine marketing to make sure their brand and products are visible (SEM). SEM's primary goal is to draw in potential customers and visitors to the website so they may either use the service or make a purchase. SEM is a marketing tool that aids in the execution of a marketing plan in the online (virtual) environment [2].

Many e-businesses struggle with the decision of whether to base their online marketing strategy on SEO, PPC, or both [4]. This prompts businesses to research the best strategy for achieving their objective [5]. Sadly, there hasn't been any research that could aid companies in choosing the ideal e-marketing approach. This is primarily due to the problem's complexity and dependence on numerous factors. They include the type of business, the level of competition in the specific industry, the market, the usability of the website, the visibility of the goods and services, brand recognition, etc.

1.1 SEO (Search Engine Optimization): The common practise of using online strategies known as search engine optimization (SEO) to optimise websites in order to automatically increase their visibility and rank in search engine results pages (SERPs). Local SEO can target certain audiences in your region to draw leads and boost conversions, while general SEO can help your firm rank for keywords on a national scale. Additionally, local SEO enables firms to market their goods and services to nearby residents in a specific region. Find out more about the benefits of starting a local SEO campaign for your company.

As a developer, there are several things you can do to increase your website's SEO and expand its audience and effectiveness which are as follows:



Figure 1: Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

1.1.1. *Do keyword research:* Recognize the needs of users. To decide which keywords you want your pages to rank for, research your competition. Always keep in mind that less competition exists for longer keywords.

1.1.2. *Content is king at all times:* You ought to be the one who is most familiar with your intended market. Consider your user's needs while you write your material. Educate your users while being current. Keep it longer than 600 words is even preferable, but avoid stuffing your text with keywords; instead, use synonyms.

1.1.3. *Make use of Open Graph Types and Metatags:* Search engines can better understand your content thanks to metatags. Your page title, description, and content, as well as your social media presence, should all be included in the <head> tag.

1.1.4. *Use Semantics and Headers that are organized:* Look at the hierarchy of your headers on your page body. The guideline is straightforward: utilise on the <h1> header, half the <h2> headers, and you can use the <h3> and <h4> headers indefinitely. Use headers appropriately and format your information for readability.

1.1.5. *Specify a purpose for your URLs:* Keywords help to give pages' URLs meaningful paths. If a page with a faulty URL has already been published, make sure to correct it and reroute users.

1.1.6. *Internal hyperlinks:* Employ anchor texts! Internal linking is essential if you want to increase the crawlers' capacity to index the pages on your website and enhance user experience by providing context for your page sections. Link the pages on your website together by utilising text that is both meaningful and pertinent.

1.1.7. *Add ALT text to your image:* Screen readers used by people who are visually impaired read alternative text. Not only does using ALT text increase accessibility, it also aids search engines in comprehending the content of your photographs.

1.1.8. *Design that is mobile-friendly:* Smartphones and tablets are being used by more and more individuals to access websites. Make sure that both desktop and mobile versions of your websites run smoothly. Response time is greatly aided by media queries.

1.1.9. *User experience and page speed:* Google recently unveiled Web Essentials, a set of criteria for assessing the user experience on your site. To enhance page performance and lower bounce rates, consider and implement these suggestions.

1.1.10. *Don't Repeat Content:* Users and search engines alike prefer new, original, and fresh material. Avoid publishing same material to several URLs. If you need to duplicate material, add rel="canonical" to the content's index page on your website.

1.2 *Choosing the SEO Strategies:* Scientific literature does not provide adequate documentation of the criteria for selecting the right tactics or the methods to use them when designing the SEM campaign. The standards are frequently portrayed as unsupported heuristics developed by SEM experts. To our knowledge, no research has been done specifically on the issue of applying methods for collecting the sales brought about by SEM and the systematic calculation of ROI. The issue is particularly noticeable in businesses that are not solely focused on online sales but instead utilise these tools to draw clients and build their familiarity with the brand and its goods.

In this article, we'll outline our attempts to systematically capture ROI for two businesses with very different sales strategies.

- A business that offers tiles for sale online.
- A business that sells software through sales agents rather than directly online.

The remainder of the essay is structured as follows. A summary of the methods used to select an acceptable e-business strategy is provided in Section 2. A PPC campaign is discussed in Section 3. The paper is concluded in Section 4.

2. E-BUSINESS STRATEGY ON RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Businesses design their e-marketing plan to increase internet traffic in order to advertise their brands, products, and services. Implementing SEO, PPC, or even combined can achieve this. In this section, we go through a number of criteria that might aid firms in selecting the best e-marketing strategy.

Given that the costs of investing in PPC and SEO can differ, ROI is the crucial factor when comparing the two. ROI is determined by subtracting the "return from investment" from the "cost of investment" and dividing that result by the "cost of investment."

2.1 Various ways to Maximize Your Online Marketing Return on Investment:

Any business, small or large, will constantly search for effective and efficient web marketing strategies. To draw attention to the company, campaigns are performed, experts are recruited, and a wide range of instruments are utilised. Due to all the activity, it is highly likely that the Return on Investment, or ROI as it is frequently termed, will be overlooked.

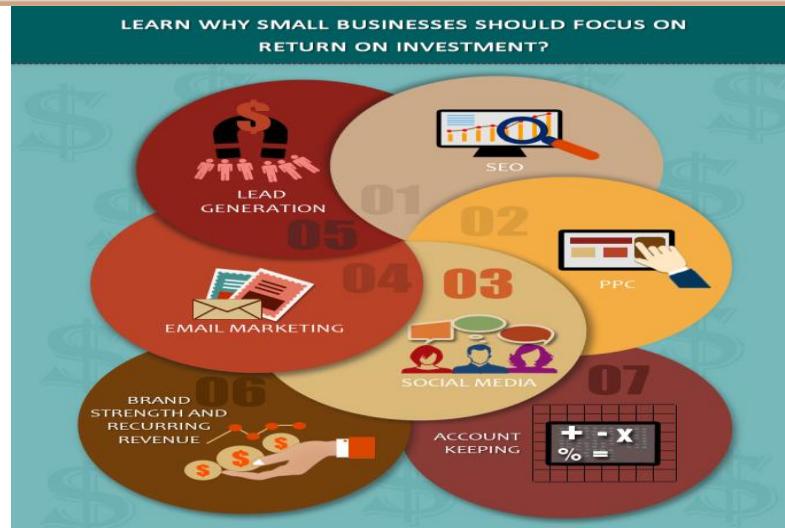


Figure 2: Small Businesses Should Focus on ROI

Figure 2 shows various ways to maximize our Return on Investment (ROI).

Because SEM activities do not provide the company's profit solely, calculating ROI for SEM is not a simple operation. It is also a result of a number of other things, including as the customers' familiarity with the brand and product, their faith in the brand and product, and the general market trend. In order to capture ROI, a thorough examination of the business process and the sales channels is necessary.

This is significant since it applies to businesses where not all sales are made immediately online. Companies that use a variety of marketing and sales channels must have internal systems to monitor the point of sale. Identifying if a sale is the consequence of SEM or whether other factors are having an impact on sales is also important.

3. PAY PER CLICK

The process of Pay Per Click is shown in figure 2.



Figure 2: PPC (Pay Per Click)

Google's pay-per-click (PPC) AdWords model enables businesses to select keywords, develop advertisements that are relevant to their website, and place bids (against rival businesses) on how much they are willing to pay per click to drive traffic directly to their website. The basic idea behind the keyword bidding procedure is that if you are prepared to pay more than 430 of your competitors, your link will be placed above them. A single click will therefore cost more the more well-liked and in-demand the phrase is. Depending on a budget specified, AdWords gives businesses the immediate chance to compete and target new audiences in various or new geographic areas, providing them a broader reach and level of control over their website.

As is obvious, PPC is easier to utilise and use right away for advertising purposes. In contrast to pure SEO, which requires some ability to set up and target appropriately, it allows a corporation complete control over the entire advertising process.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The two primary e-marketing strategies—pay per click and search engine optimization—have been covered in this essay. Before the campaign, it is important to assess the possible return on investment of the two alternative techniques. We have also spoken about some fundamental measures that may be used to measure this return once the campaign has begun. We have discussed how we track the campaign and determine its future course with a systematic methodology. We anticipate that this study will serve as a useful springboard for additional research and provide empirical proof of SEM's effectiveness as well as reliable ROI metrics. We anticipate that this research will give SMEs clear guidance in selecting the optimal e-marketing approach based on the specifics of their firm.

References:

- [1] Netcraft December Web Server Survey [online]. [Accessed 20 January 2009]. Available from World Wide Web: <http://news.netcraft.com/archives/2008/12/24/december_2008_web_server_survey.html> 2009
- [2] S. Smigler [online]. [Accessed 11 March 2009]. Available from World Wide Web: <<http://www.scottsmigler.com/>> 2004
- [3] K. Ratliff. (Organic SEO vs. PPC) [online]. [Accessed 27 December 2008]. Available from World Wide Web: http://www.webpronews.com/insiderreports/2007/11/06/organic-seo-vsppc_2007
- [4] DISC SEO vs. PPC [online]. [Accessed 15 December 2008]. Available from World Wide Web: http://www.2disc.com/seo_vs_ppc.html_2007
- [5] T. Ash Landing Page Optimisation 1st ed. Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, Inc. 2008
- [6] Netapplications NetApplications [online]. [Accessed 20 March 2009]. Available from World Wide Web: December 2009
- [7] J.L. Ledford, J. LSearch engine optimization Bible. 1st ed. Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, Inc. . 2008
- [8] iProspect. 'Search Engine User Attitudes' iProspect [online]. [Accessed 23 November 2009] Available from 2007
- [9] G. Hotkiss, S Alston and G. Edwards Google eye Tracking report [online] 2005
- [10] Google (2008). Google Online Marketing Challenge. 1st ed. California: Google, Inc.