



## ***About Web Strategy***

When trading *off-line*, a merchant is able to take advantage of a vast amount of theory and practical experience which help guide him towards increased profitability within his chosen market.

On-line commerce is similar in many ways, however the market develops and changes much faster and an authoritative textbook would have started its move towards obsolescence before hitting the bookshelves.

A fast-changing market is both a threat and an opportunity and although it means keeping on top of current developments for an established store, it enables newer businesses to take advantage of shifting currents to bring themselves rapid growth.

It is this rapid growth which we set out to achieve for your business, achieved by taking advantage of the leading edge of market trends online.

Web-strategy is a fusion of search engine marketing, social marketing, affiliate marketing and more. Our aim is to formulate for you an up-to-date strategy targeted at the requirements and aims of your particular business incorporating different concepts and methods which we believe will be beneficial for you.

## *Targeting*

The Internet provides a mixture of one-to-one and mass-market opportunities. Whilst you are going to be addressing vast numbers of people, you also have the means to target and relate to individuals or groups of customers.

An important part of a web strategy is to ensure good targeting so that your efforts are focused upon the kind of internet user most likely to become your customer.

We identify your potential customers, both through a review of your existing customers and by research into current activity in your niche. We search string patterns, records of existing advertising campaigns and traffic statistics help us build up a picture of your potential customers and where they can be found.

Having identified your potential customers, we find the most effective way to reach them and work out ways which are both cost effective and leads to your message being well received. This can involve methods ranging from the direct purchase of targeted advertisements to indirect exposure of your products through social products such as Blogs.

## *Managed Conventional Marketing*

The mainstay of online marketing today is the search engine, offering the businessman exposure to customers searching for his product. Conceptually, being able to place your adverts on search results pages is a very powerful tool as for many sectors it means putting your message in front of customers who are actively seeking to buy.

Targeting for these campaigns is mediated by the search engines themselves and includes both targeting in geographical terms and selection of particular search strings. An auction model is most common for pricing these adverts and so the more competitive and profitable a niche is, the more you should anticipate paying.

A step higher than pay-per-impression, search marketing typically charges on a pay-per-click basis, meaning each time you make a payment you are assured it relates to at least one visitor.

On the pay-per-click front we will investigate the costing, conversion potential and the traffic volume for each of the key search terms we have evaluated on your behalf. This means narrowing down the geographical scope, identifying and removing unwanted keywords and assessing the quality score of your landing pages for relevance to the chosen search term. The first thing we aim for is to decide if this kind of advertising will be economical for you, and if so we then will build a campaign strategy which can be used to move that forwards.

Other conventional marketing forms which we will evaluate on your behalf include graphical unit placements on key sites or networks, banner advertisements more typically used for building brands or introducing new concepts, and placing your marketing message within newsletters.

As part of our web strategy development we will design strategies for each of the marketing models which will be beneficial to you, enabling quick transition towards implementation.

### ***Conventional to Social Marketing***

The vast majority of advertising spend is upon conventional marketing forms such as television, radio, newspaper and banner advertising. However, the great value of word-of-mouth advertising is well known amongst businesses of all types. Social marketing is where the two become mixed to some extent and advertising moves from pure advertisement to participation in the social and community structures of the internet.

Established examples of social marketing off-line include sponsorship of community events and making services available. Online the same concepts hold; exposure may be obtained both by direct sponsorship of a community but also by contributions that add value and are more directly appreciated by the users.

We investigate this kind of opportunity and plan how you can make the best use of them to bring potential customers to your website.

*Techniques which we can recommend include:*

- Advertorial features to be carried by relevant blogs and online magazines, combining useful information and exposure to your brand and product
- Community participation in such a way that you and your brand build up an image of being an integral part of the social landscape in your niche, engendering trust and occupying mind-space.
- Micro-site concepts in which you produce a website aimed at filling a perceived need, such as useful information about a topic or a tool which will be valued by users. Your ROI in this case is indirect through advertising placed on the website or embedded brand exposure
- Sponsorship of useful and interesting websites, or websites with a social aspect reflecting values which would be beneficial if associated with your brand

This list is by no means exhaustive but covers the most common techniques; there are many other possible levels of involvement, depending upon your particular brand and product.

## *Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)*

For many businesses, especially for those operating in a highly competitive market niche, being found on-line is often more about where you appear in search engine results than how many people know your domain name.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is the utilisation of techniques to improve the search engine result position (SERP) you receive for search words which relate to your website.

Of the fundamental maxims of SEO is that 'content is king'; a phrase which describes the fact that without content on your website your website is unlikely to benefit from SEO efforts. Very few people will be searching just to find your phone number, most of your visitors will want to find you based upon what you do, what you know and information about your company. This means providing people with answers to questions – questions which reveal that they would benefit from your products and services.

A core part of this research is our analysis of all the available data relating to your market segment. This allows us to find out what people are looking for and then design ways in which we can supply those answers. Once we have attracted the traffic, we can use that opportunity to bring forwards your own brand and product message.

Search engine and internet usage data is available from many sources and we will purchase or compile this, analyse it, and include it with your report.

We look in to other methods which may include optimisation for Image Search, News Search or Local Search, all of which give you access to niche markets which may be less competitive than the global results for your term, winning you additional visitors. The key consideration for us at this point is to determine whether the strategy is likely to provide you with an economical means of gaining customers.

Not all of our SEO efforts take place on your website itself. Work to help your rankings also involves other external websites and services, especially as links towards your website from respected and relevant other websites has become one of the most important factors in SEO.

Our web strategy analysis includes an assessment of the potential of SEO to benefit your website, along with some recommendations of on-site and off-site SEO. The extent of the SEO research is not as deep as that contained within our full SEO Research and Analysis but will serve as foundation upon which you can build an SEO presence, and as a starting point for a more complete strategy should you determine that SEO is going to be a very important part of your online activities.

### ***Customer and Market Segmentation***

Many companies trade within a sector characterised by different kinds of customer who will be seeking different solutions or even the same solution but for different problems. We will investigate the kind of customer you need to target and use this to inform our web strategy work.

This is based upon a number of techniques, generally including:

- *Analysis* of the search and web browsing habits of your competitor's customers
- Broad-focused research through questions in *social media* such as forums from which we can gain insight
- A survey of your existing site visitors to answer key questions such as whether the website offers them the solution they want; and if not, what they wanted which was different

The more we are able to connect to your target customer, the most accurately we can advise you upon both how you can better meet their needs and how you can attract them to your service.

### ***Branding***

For companies where brand building is required we will evaluate how your brand exposure can be increased as part of your web strategy. This is a longer-haul undertaking than general web-marketing but when executed effectively for the right product it can bring rewards far in excess of web-marketing over a longer period of time.

### ***Competitive Analysis***

Throughout our analysis one of the key sources of information will be your competitors. Successful businesses must be doing something right, especially those which are exhibiting growth. Whether it is in terms of conventional marketing, social marketing or SEO, there are public-facing indications of current activity which we can record and analyse to help us come up with something which works.

This includes our analysis of their existing traffic sources, advertising activity, exposure in other online media such as newspapers or blogs and a determination of what the key points of their marketing strategy are. This is compiled into the report both as a means by which we can learn about successful strategies for your particular market niche, and to inform you as a business owner about what your competitors are doing.

### ***Report and Proposal***

Our web-strategy project culminates in a report detailing our findings and our proposals in each section.

It shows the costs (sometimes estimated) associated with these if you wish to undertake them using our services and also allows you to complete parts of the work yourself if required.

The proposal will identify at least two key areas which have been developed in detail with a plan of implementation. These will be the parts of a general web strategy which we have assessed to be the most likely to be able to gain you customers and fit your business. Other possible strategies which we feel to be less effective for your site will be outlined in less detail, but can be more fully developed in the future should that be required by building upon the data and analysis contained within the earlier sections of the report.

We will also include a list of points which we have noted during our research which could be beneficial to you. These may include key websites we feel you might wish to contact, forums in which you might want to participate, weaknesses or opportunities on your own site or informative links relating to your competitors and market sector.