

INTERNET MARKETING FACT SHEET

AN OVERVIEW OF EXACTLY WHAT IS INTERNET MARKETING AND WHY IT'S ESSENTIAL FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Provided by GoAhead Marketing Limited

Using the internet to help grow a business (or to actually host an online business) is basically a 5 step process:

1. Find out what people are actually searching for (the keywords)
2. Decide how best to meet the need of what people are searching for
3. Design a website which can easily be found by the people searching the internet and using these keywords and which will make them want to stay, purchase product or give their email address
4. Get traffic to the website. Apply search engine optimisation techniques to make sure that the website appears high on the search engines when people type these keywords in. Other methods of getting traffic to a website include 'pay per click' search engines, website advertising, newsletter advertising plus other 'traditional' advertising such as newspapers, radio, TV.
5. Monitor and tweak the site to ensure that it achieves the highest conversion rates possible (i.e. sales or lead capturing) and also continues to get as much traffic as possible, via the search engines or which ever traffic building methods that are being used

The most important part of this process is Step 1 – finding out what people are searching for

online. Why? Because, it means that you can build a site dedicated to meeting the need EXACTLY of what people are searching for plus it takes away the uncertainty of building a website and wondering whether or not there are people interested in what you're selling.

There are tools that tell us exactly how many searches have taken place on search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN and can also help suggest other potential keywords that we might like to consider.

In terms of search engine usage, Google is the most widely used search engine (approx. 44%), followed by Yahoo (29%) and MSN (13%) . These search tools also provide statistics on what sites are ranking highly and the 'make-up' of the site (from a search engines point of view), allowing a significant amount of competitive research to be undertaken.

So, for example, if you are a company that sells DVDs, the tools give figures that show that although approximately 5,000 people a day are typing in 'DVD' into the search engines worldwide, there are 128 million other sites using that as a keyword - a lot of competition! Whereas, nearly 500 people a day are looking for 'Jaws DVD' with only 874 competing websites - making it a much easier target – assuming you sell Jaws DVDs!.

Once the keyword research has been undertaken, it is then necessary to sit down and decide exactly which search terms to target. This focus on specific search terms is by far the best way to build traffic on the internet.

Having decided on the appropriate search term(s), the next step is to build an appropriate website. While it is much more preferable to use an existing site, a badly designed site or one that doesn't specifically target the chosen keywords won't be good enough in the competitive world of achieving high search engine rankings. It is highly likely that the site will need amended to make it 'search engine friendly'.

Due to an effect in Google known as the 'sandbox', (please see a fuller definition below) only as a last resort should you use a brand new domain name. If a new site and domain is required, however, the name chosen will be heavily influenced by the search term(s) that is picked.

It is very important that the software or system used to create a new web-site is 'search engine friendly'. This means using as much straightforward HTML as possible and, particularly if using a dynamic e-commerce system, using search engine friendly URLs.

In addition, the layout and content of a website will have a huge effect on its effectiveness. A website that generates a lot of traffic isn't any good unless it converts the traffic into real business. This can be hard cash if the site is an

e-commerce one, or potential leads if the site is for a service business.

Having designed and created the new website, the next step is to get traffic to it. Although there are a number of website traffic building techniques, by far the best method of getting traffic to a website is by appearing high in the 'normal' (not paid) search engine results for the chosen keyword(s).

As Google is the most widely used search engine, this is the search engine to initially optimise for. Also, a site that has a high ranking in Google will usually also achieve a high ranking on the other major search engines of Yahoo and MSN.

To achieve a high ranking in Google is basically a two step process:

1. On page optimisation
2. Off page optimisation

The on page optimisation is taken care of during the website (re-)design and involves factors such as page titles and page descriptions.

Off page optimisation, which is more important, is achieved using one thing – incoming links. As far as Google is concerned, the more links that come into a website from other websites, then the more important that website must be.

Now, it isn't that simple! The way the link actually works and the site that it is coming from have a huge bearing on the effectiveness of the link. Do make sure you avoid things like link farms and emails that

say they can get thousands of links for \$50. If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is!

Once traffic is coming to a website, the site statistics must be carefully watched to ensure that the highest possible conversion rates are being achieved. There is little point in getting a thousand visitors a day to a website if they simply browse the site for a minute and then click away without actually buying something, or giving their email address.

This ongoing monitoring and 'fine tuning' of a website is also very important and must be carried out on a regular basis. Using website statistic packages such as AWStats or StatCounter (your domain hosting company should be able to advise you on what they have available) will enable you to monitor exactly what is happening with your website.

Statistics such as:

- how many people are coming to your website
- where they come from
- which pages they visit
- how long they spend on your site

are just a few examples of what is available. Study these, because it will show you what is working and what is not working, allowing you to focus on the main areas that need improved.

Regarding the previously mentioned Google 'sandbox', It must be noted here that a new domain name and website is very unlikely to show up in the Google search engine results for at least 6 months, usually longer (for competitive keywords). This is because of Google operating

a 'sandbox' which means that it won't show any new websites until it has 'served its time' in the sandbox and Google has decided that it is a suitable site to show.

No one knows (outside Google that is!) exactly what the criteria is for how long a site stays in the sandbox, but our experience is that it is typically 8 – 12 months from a new site first being listed.

Conclusion

The world of Internet Marketing and search engine optimisation is a very complex one. However, the rewards of ranking highly for a specific keyword can be very high, if the keyword has been chosen properly. The tried and tested approach to a successful website is basically a 6 step process:

Step 1 – Remove the guesswork from a website by finding out exactly what people are already searching for on The Internet that relates to a particular business.

Step 2 – Ensure that the site appears high in the search engine rankings by designing the website around the keywords identified in Step 1

Step 3 – Obtain high search engine rankings by optimising the site for the three main search engines (Google, Yahoo and MSN) and registering the site in the right way

Step 4 – Make sure the site is easy to use by using strict guidelines on layout, use of colours, etc.

Step 5 – Maximise the number of people visiting the site by using other marketing techniques as well as

search engines – such as advertising on other websites, ezine and offline marketing

Step 6 – Maximise the potential of a website by monitoring the site on a weekly basis and utilising ongoing site optimisation.

Contact us to learn more and to request a free Internet Marketing consultation.

This is of course at no obligation to you to work with us. We're simply happy to help.

So get in touch with us. You can contact us several ways:

- ① Email: info@goaheadmarketing.com
- ② Phone: +44 28 9051 1250
- ③ Complete the [Contact Us](#) form at <http://www.goaheadmarketing.com/contact-form.html> and one of our staff will phone you in the next 24-48 hours.

We look forward to hearing from you.