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The Value of A Singular Platform: Increasing SMB Engagement & Retention via SaaS Synergy

Tuesday, October 4, 2011 by [Eric Rosen](#)

After spending 3 inspirational days representing [WebVisible](#) at the [DMS 2011](#) conference in Denver (put on by [BIA/Kelsey](#)), one thing seems more true than ever: SMB owners have their hands full. They recognize the importance of internet advertising, but often wear multiple hats, juggling sales, marketing, and branding in one hand, and customer service, retention and innovation in the other hand. Outsourcing is often the only viable solution for many of their day-to-day business processes, including lead generation and marketing on the Internet.

As a company founded and known for excellence in supporting reseller and partners with small business advertising solutions, [WebVisible](#) manages many of the same processes upstream. Pay Per Click online advertising, lead generation, SaaS driven marketing solutions and Reputation Monitoring are all part of our value proposition. Our goal is always three-fold: deliver easy to use marketing solutions for [WebVisible](#) clients via an automated advertising system, provide scalable solutions for our partners, and innovate, innovate, innovate.

I read an article recently about [Steve Job's formula for success](#) at Apple, who lists the following as one of his top mantras for success: **"Make it all one platform"**. Apple's commitment to blurring the distinction between software and hardware with respect to providing a singular user experience has driven every-day consumer experiences with mobile devices into the cloud. iPhone is iTunes is Mobile.me (now [iCloud](#)). Their customer loyalty is unparalleled, and it's largely due to their commitment to platform integration and unified user experience.

[WebVisible](#) recently unveiled a cutting edge Reputation Monitoring product. It stood alone with a separate log-in for a short while, but is now baked into our Merchant Center Dashboard alongside [Geneva](#), [KPEye](#) and all of the other behind-the-scenes technology that our customers, partners and resellers benefit from on a daily basis.

Steve Jobs' desire to make Apple 'just one thing', with no distinction between hardware, software, products and services is largely paralleled with the Reputation Monitoring iFrame integration for two reasons:

1.) Fusing access to our Merchant Center and Reputation Monitoring dashboard effectively turns two activities into one, making it easier for a business owner to keep track of online advertising and reputation. If you're wondering how or why this is, think about the area code of your cell phone. Area codes are perceived as a single unit of information, not three separate numbers. Single sign-on access for a dashboard benefits from the same psychological principal.

2.) The second is a bit more of a game-changer, as it leverages the well-known statute of negative word of mouth, and that it travels 10 times faster than positive word-of-mouth, albeit in reverse.

Delivering world-class results to our advertisers is easy. Helping them to carve time out of their busy schedules to spend time engaging with our Merchant Center to revel in the success of their SEM campaigns is a bit more challenging. If an advertiser invests in a successful advertising platform that delivers dynamite results, if they don't engage with the platform, they might not recognize the success of the campaign even when we are exceeding their expectations.


Business owners are busy, and they don't know what they don't know.

To this end, the real magic in platform integration is that by giving our advertisers the ability to identify and respond to negative (and positive) reviews in a unified dashboard, their retention rates increase.


Why is this?

How do negative reviews relate to lead generation, advertiser retention and platform engagement?

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By putting Reputation Monitoring right alongside the ability to track SEM campaigns simultaneously, something remarkable happens. Marketing and Reputation Monitoring merge into the same platform and become synonymous in terms of the mental energy it takes for advertisers to set aside on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Advertisers' log in to their Merchant Center dashboard more often, and retention increases alongside client satisfaction.

According to the principle of the speed of word of mouth, the desire to vet out and respond to or eliminate negative reviews online is also far greater than the desire to read positive reviews. Since advertisers are already online and logged in checking their reviews, they naturally check the results of their advertising campaigns since it's only a click away. Merging these previously separate platforms together drives advertisers to engage more frequently, for longer, and with greater attentiveness. With platform integration, the distinctions between marketing Reputation Monitoring blur into a singular activity, encouraging more frequent and increased platform engagement with our advertisers.

Lead generation services and reputation monitoring tools are now interrelated, interdependent and act as drivers and motivators for one another. The power of harnessing innovation via platform integration is gestalt-esque, resulting in a downstream increase in both perceived and objective value in the eyes of advertisers, and an upstream lift in retention rates for resellers.

1 + 1 now equals 3.

Apple isn't Apple because of it's product mix alone.

Apple is Apple because of it's unified user experience.

When it comes to the complexity of Internet advertising for small businesses, platform integration is as crucial as ever for today's SMB.

If I was a betting man, I'd say that Steve Jobs would be proud of us :)

Eric Rosen
Manager of Business Development
[WebVisible](#)

To learn more about why online advertising agencies worldwide make [WebVisible](#) as their Interactive Advertising Software Platform of choice, click [here](#).

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SMB: Is SEO Playing an Integral Part in Your Online Marketing?

Wednesday, July 6, 2011 by [Team WebVisible](#)

According to a recent [Affinity Express survey](#) of small to medium businesses (SMB), it appears the importance of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is often overlooked. As shown in the following chart from the survey, 77% of SMBs are using websites and landing pages to market their businesses, but only 31% are using SEO to assure customers will easily find them online.



There are probably many reasons as to why the use of SEO is rather low in comparison to website and landing page usage (ie. limited resources, lack of knowledge, or perhaps businesses feel their products or services will speak for themselves). Whatever the reasons, SMBs need to realize that in today's market, SEO is an integral part of any online marketing effort. It is not an option, it is a necessity. Since most consumers today are searching online to find potential products and services available, a business must optimize the chances of their website being found on major search engines by using SEO.

SEO can be challenging for any business, especially smaller ones with limited resources since keeping up with the competition, popular search terms, and the ever-changing algorithms search engines like Google and Bing use is a continuous process. To meet this challenge, many businesses find out-sourcing this task more efficient. WebVisible is a Software as a Service (SaaS) company and leading name in local online advertising, known for being a true expert in bringing the Internet as an advertising and customer acquisition medium to small businesses around the world. WebVisible's award winning Geneva software platform (named 2008 Internet Product of the Year by the American Electronics Association) contains a powerful optimizer – a rules-based campaign management algorithm that continuously learns and improves the placement and results of our clients' advertisements. With over ten years of experience, WebVisible offers proven SEO results.

To learn more about how WebVisible can provide SEO solutions and other Internet marketing services, please feel free to [contact us](#).

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Trend Six: SEO Will Become Even More Complex

Tuesday, February 1, 2011 by [WebVisible Team](#)

As part six in a six part blog series, WebVisible is providing a reality check for some digital marketing predictions for 2011, offering the perspective of small businesses and what to expect – or not – from them in digital marketing in the coming year.

Trend: "SEO Will Become Even More Complex"

From: [2011 Predictions: Online Marketing Trends](#)



SMB POV: Search engine algorithms are constantly changing, as are the online channels where you can place content, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Yelp, etc. Adding location-based services and video to the mix, it's getting more and more difficult to publish enough content in enough places with the right format and quality to ensure a high placement with SEO. SMB owners don't have the time or the expertise to develop an SEO strategy to get new customers, one reason why they increasingly rely on turnkey online advertising solutions, which are far more predictable and trackable. Although Cost Per Click (CPC) continues to rise, internationally search advertising is quite affordable. WebVisible's Q4 2010 report shows average spending per advertiser up 30 percent year-over-year in the UK, where CPCs are a fraction of the cost in the US. The report also contains data from 2,600 small business advertisers in Australia, a small but rapidly growing market.

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Live from BIA/Kelsey ILM:2010 Day 2

Thursday, December 9, 2010 by [WebVisible Team](#)

Blogging live from [Interactive Local Media](#) 2010 in Santa Clara, CA, Carla Fitzgerald, WebVisible's VP of Marketing gives an update:

Topics today addressed a variety of local content channels: Local News, Local Radio, Local Search, Local Deal-of-the-Day offers. With so many options to reach consumers, advertisers have tough decisions to make about where they should invest and what will deliver the best ROI. Along these lines, the partner from Google Ventures (investment arm of Google) said there is a huge opportunity for companies that provide analytics to small business that helps them to understand which customer acquisition and retention programs work. SMB's need "visibility and actionable information" to manage their online investments because it's overwhelming. I was happy to hear that since "visibility and actionable information" is exactly what WebVisible is offering with our Merchant Center application for advertisers.

There was a lot of talk about the fact that "local" is not a static, geographic radius from a business or service area. What the consumer sees as "local" depends on what they are looking for: if it's a regular purchase, like dry cleaning, then local needs to be convenient to work or home; if the need is for a special event like a concert or show, then "local" can be a lot further away and the price or offer really matters, and if it's for a critical service like tooth replacement, then the location and price are only part of the decision – the credentials and reviews are just as important. Again, this multi-dimensional view of "local" is something our founder, Kirsten Mangers, has been talking about for years. (WebVisible is validated once again!)

The hot topics of Social and Mobile get "merged" when discussing "mobile location check in" services like Gowalla and Foursquare. (Google Ventures said they're looking at 35 different companies that offer this type of technology!) These solutions can help advertisers with brand awareness, reputation management, generating more foot traffic, loyalty programs, and promoting onsite deals. These are not specific to small business, but definitely focused on driving local business, and in some cases, driving loyalty to big brands. What's the SMB message? Most importantly, understand what your customers care about and how they like to engage you. If you're a local bar targeting hip young adults, then location check-in may be just the right thing for you, but if you're an attorney, probably not... unless you're trying to stir up a class action of some kind!

There is an explosion of digital marketing technologies and services being developed, and even the experts at this conference are not sure which approaches will pay off for advertisers in the long term. Regardless of the sexy new technologies available, the message was still clear that small business still needs simpler, measureable ways to promote themselves today. We couldn't agree more!

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What Makes a Win-Win-Win Situation?

Wednesday, August 25, 2010 by [WebVisible Team](#)

I'm an expert at navigating my way through a new city. I've slept in just about every hotel in the nation. I know airports like the back of my hand. I'm a travel warrior, and collect frequent flyer miles like some people collect change. My name is Ambre Merendino, and I am the Director of Partner Sales Support working on WebVisible's Partner Development team.

Unlike many people, I'm one of the lucky ones that can honestly say I love my job. I collaborate with exceptional co-workers, who all educate our partners and their sales teams about WebVisible's local online advertising solutions. We have great synergy with our partners; they bring their world-class branding and traditional advertising expertise to the table, WebVisible steps in with our online advertising expertise, and together we provide Small Business Owners a fully-managed marketing solution.

As a member of the Partner Sales Support team, one of the questions that I get most often is, "What makes WebVisible different from competitors?" With the technology enhancements we continue to roll out, and the close collaboration with our partners, this question gets easier and easier to answer.

1. Merchant Center: This is WebVisible's interactive campaign manager for our customers. It allows them to see exactly what is going on in their online advertising campaigns at all times, as well as being able to measure results and control the types of calls they get. Other vendors provide reporting, but no other provider gives as much control, visibility and flexibility to customers as we do with Merchant Center. The combination of Merchant Center and our highly-targeted ad management in Geneva (the underlying platform) lets our customers identify and focus on their highest value opportunities to maximize their ROI.

2. Landing Pages: While other companies focus on driving leads to a Web site, we've found that highly optimized Landing Pages (LPs) convert searches into leads almost twice as often as Web sites do. Our LPs are built to turn researchers into active buyers by answering all of the key questions within 4-6 seconds (location, phone number, special offers, video, email, map, etc.). LPs also allow our customers to feature different promotions with different ads, and track results, without constant maintenance to their Web sites.

3. Customer Service and Expertise – Direct or Indirect: We pride ourselves on being experts in our field, but customers can choose from a long list of well-known partners to provide our online advertising solutions as well. When combining print, directories and search advertising, customers can have a one-stop-shopping experience with our partners, whose traditional marketing brand is one they know and trust. They get the added value of WebVisible's innovative technology with a team of advertising experts to fully manage their marketing campaign across several media. Other search marketing companies can't offer the network we've built, and can't scale to support the tens of thousands of customers served by our partners. We planned for this type of network right from the beginning!

WebVisible has nearly a decade of experience helping small and mid-size businesses advertise on the Internet. When you combine our expertise and technology with our expansive partnerships, our clients can be sure that they are

receiving the benefits of a win-win-win situation!

- Contributed by Ambre Merendino, Director, Partner Sales Support

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Time to Join the Social Media Bandwagon

Monday, October 19, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

While big brands are all over social media, many small business owners have yet to invest in social marketing initiatives. According to a recent Citibank [survey on social media usage by small businesses](#), few are using the social networking sites. Seventy-six percent of those surveyed said they haven't found sites like Facebook and Twitter helpful in finding more business leads or for expanding their business over the past year. Interestingly, the survey reported small businesses rely much more on search engines than they do on social media.

One possible explanation for this is the time and effort it takes to create and manage social initiatives. A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* offered one solution to this problem: [hiring an outside company to manage your small business' social media](#). The small-business owners mentioned in the article said spending money to manage social media was worth the investment.

Conversely, others think that managing social media sites in-house is better because the information comes directly from the company itself. Another option is for third party social media services companies to help small businesses set up their social media campaign on various sites like Facebook and Twitter, and then let these businesses take over the day-to-day management of the social media sites. It's important for small business owners to manage their social media sites on a daily basis because it provides a way for them to be connected to clients and potential customers when they are not face-to-face. Regardless of the methods small businesses use to set up and manage their social media campaigns, the article from *The Wall Street Journal* speaks directly to the 76 percent of small business owners from the Citibank survey that didn't find social media sites helpful for growing their business. The article doesn't explicitly say that social media is a necessary tool for expanding small business; however, we get the impression social media sites are becoming increasingly necessary for small business owners.

In an example from *The Wall Street Journal* article, J.R. Cohen, manager of Coffee Groundz coffee shop in Houston, TX, describes the creation of Facebook and Twitter profiles for his business: "Customers started tweeting orders and special requests, such as booth reservations." As a result of the profiles on social media sites, he says that "in-store events promoted on the sites drew crowds three times as large as those previously advertised through signs and other traditional means," showing that social media sites were successful in increasing his sales.

An [article posted on Search Engine Land](#) speaks to the findings of the Citibank survey and *The Wall Street Journal* article. It takes the side of the small business owners surveyed with the statement that it is unlikely that people will abandon Google and Bing to search on sites like Facebook and Twitter. It also echoes the increasing emphasis the article places on social media sites by describing them as continually-growing complements to search engines.

The growing emphasis on social media sites for businesses will only continue to increase. Small business owners, take note: it's time to start jumping on the social media bandwagon.

- Contributed by Kimberly Weber

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Small Businesses - How Do You Market Yourself?

Friday, August 21, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

I saw the yellow pages delivery outside our building a while back and it got me thinking... when was the last time I used one?

Small business owners: Pop quiz - when was the last time you used the print yellow pages as a consumer? Research shows that the Internet is the first choice of people looking for local products and services.

Merchants should go through the exercise of thinking like consumers when contemplating small business advertising solutions, and incorporate that thinking into their marketing plan. Want to learn more? A recent study on consumer behavior, with marketing recommendations is [available here](#).





For a balanced marketing approach, there is also a really cool new tool called Compass which provides expert guidance on how much to spend, and what types of advertising to use to achieve specific revenue goals or maximize profit. A free version of called "Compass Lite" is [available here](#).

-- Contributed by Jeff Werner

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The Power of Google for Your Local Internet Marketing

Wednesday, July 8, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

WebVisible provides excellent services for its local online advertising customers by providing visibility across the major search engines and their associated distribution networks. This brings more traffic to their Web sites and landing pages, and more phone calls that in turn help increase business.

Google recently launched the Local Business Center, which gives local business owners the ability to track impressions and actions on their Web sites and landing pages. You can see how people are searching for you and what keywords they are looking for to get to your business. You can also see exactly where the customers are coming from. This can give you the insight to open up a sister store in places where most of your customers are coming from, or you can update your services to meet the demands of the public.

Google Local Business Center is designed for local small businesses marketing on the Internet so they can better engage with their audience. It uses the power of Google Analytics and directs the technology toward focusing on small business advertising solutions.

For more information: "[New for local business owners: the Google Maps LBC dashboard](#)"

-- Contributed by Junaid Ahmed

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The Changing Landscape for Small Business Advertisers

Thursday, April 30, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

It's important for small business advertisers to shift their marketing strategies from print to digital solutions. Let me tell you why.

The Audit Bureau of Circulations released new statistics earlier this week. And once again, not good news for the printed newspaper industry: the average paid circulation for U.S. newspapers continues to drop.

Due to consolidation in some local markets, a few papers saw gains. The Denver Post, circulation increased by 160,000 copies after the Rocky Mountain News shut down. After the Seattle Post-Intelligencer closed, The Seattle Times gained almost 100,000 readers.

However, ten of the top 25 U.S. newspapers reported double-digit percentage losses for the six-month period ending on March 31. Daily circulation declined by more than 7% while Sunday distribution dropped 5.4%. The Wall Street Journal was the only top 25 newspaper to see a modest gain of .61%.

- New York Daily News: -14.26%



- New York Post: -20.5%
- Houston Chronicle: -13.96%
- Cleveland Plain Dealer: -11.7%
- Philadelphia Inquirer: -13.72%
- Star-Ledger in Newark, N.J.: -16.82%
- St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times: -10.42%
- Atlanta Journal-Constitution: -19.91%

Meanwhile, Web traffic to newspaper sites grew more than 10% in the first quarter of 2009, according to the Newspaper Association of America. Newspaper Web sites attracted more than 73.3 million monthly unique visitors on average, 43.6% of all Internet users. The study conducted by Nielsen Online for NAA also found that newspaper Web site visitors generated an average of more than 3.5 billion page views per month throughout the quarter, an increase of almost 13%.

So what does this mean for the small business advertiser (who may or may not already be marketing on the Internet)?

The above statistics are just another data point confirming what we all know: the print media is fading. There will always be a market for news and information. Americans are still reading print media, but seeking information from different sources – Internet sources that provide information quickly and efficiently. The paradigm is shifting rapidly, and there will be winners and losers as the transition takes place.

Your marketing strategies need to shift also, because there will be winning and losing advertisers as well. Check out the small business advertising solutions at WebVisible. They are geared to small business marketing online. They can help you conduct successful Internet advertising that will improve your bottom line.

-- Contributed by Jeff Werner

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Let Search Engine Marketing Put Revenue Back into your Business

Tuesday, April 14, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

As a small to medium-size business owner, you are faced with a lot of tough decisions each day. How can you cut costs to save money? How can you bring in new business so you don't have to lay off employees – or worse, family members? How do you survive, let alone grow, when most Americans are making less and spending less in this tough economy? Is there light at the end of the tunnel?

Well, there is good news for you as a small business marketer if you begin to think in these terms: 2009 can be the year of opportunity if you stop using advertising solutions that do not drive quantitative results. To get started on this 'new beginning,' ask yourself, "What, exactly am I getting from print ads, window flyers and other advertising tactics I can't measure? If your answer is 'not much,' then why are you paying for them? Ask yourself, "Why am I spending my most precious commodities, time and money, in the wrong place... when right before me stands the most cutting edge form of online advertising ever devised: search engine marketing?"

I can tell you why: you're busy. You care about your business and are understandably cautious about the unknown. After all, something new might not work, right? And you may think you can't compete with big businesses. But what if I told you there are simple tools you may not be aware of that top companies use to cash in on the low hanging fruit, and you can easily employ these online advertising strategies?

Guess what? Search engine marketing on the Internet works! It works so well that most of the top companies in America use it to bring in business or to advertise new releases of software, sell magazines and DVDs, etc.

Granted, you don't have the big budgets of the top companies. And you need tangible results for your investment. But, Mr. and Mrs. small business owner: you can, for the first time, level the playing field and compete with big companies for local business. You can place an ad the same size, just as effective (or even more so!) in the same spot as your biggest competitor, precisely when a potential customer is looking. And you can track its success to measure its effectiveness. Do you get that with a yellow pages or a newspaper print ad?

So, embrace the fact that a positive ROI (return on investment) awaits you, and it can happen fast. New business, new customers, new pipelines and more money – it's waiting for you on Google, on Yahoo!, and on MSN with your online advertising campaign.

Put your businesses name where it belongs, on top, where people can find you. Don't be dissuaded by past advertising experiences. Make 2009 the year of change and come out even stronger on the other side. Call WebVisible today and we'll show you the money!

-- Contributed by Kelly Bigham

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Online Advertising: Cost Effective in Times of Economic Uncertainty

Friday, April 3, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

Consumer confidence levels in the global economy and the institutions that got us into this mess are low. Unemployment rates have steadily increased, and economic uncertainty continues to force large and small businesses to re-evaluate their spending habits. We've seen numerous industries falter—from banks to retailers. This period in the world's financial history has changed the way both businesses and consumers spend their money.

As consumers limit their spending, so too, must the businesses that serve them. Search engine marketing is one of the most cost-effective ways small businesses can reach out to a local consumer base. While print, viral, email, or whatever kind of marketing all have their benefits, advertising on the Internet can prove to be the best bang for your buck. In terms of relevancy, search engine PPC ads are second-to-none. For example, print ads (newspapers, magazines or yellow pages) used to be the staple to any small business's marketing campaign. However, advertisers are becoming more conscious of the costs and difficulty of measuring true effectiveness of these forms of promotion.

The question is—how do you gauge a successful print campaign? The great thing about online advertising and what we, as a customer-driven organization at WebVisible, do is the ability to cater your ad to the exact specifications that you need to reach your customers. Not only can small businesses customize their ads to coincide with what consumers are searching, but they can tweak their campaigns if we find it is not working, something that print campaigns have difficulty matching. The challenge with print advertising is to select a print medium that gives you the broadest possible exposure to people who may be interested in your company's products. With search engine PPC campaigns, we already know what the consumer is interested in, allowing us to dynamically insert ads that are targeted to what consumers are actively seeking.

An online advertising campaign that is set up correctly and utilizes multiple media providers has the potential to bring a valuable return on your investment, while keeping your wallet safe. And as a Marketing Campaign Analyst, the most fulfilling part of my job is seeing a campaign get the clicks, impressions and conversions that it needs after launching. WebVisible offers a gamut of tools that any business, small or large, can take advantage of. As more and more businesses realize the marketing potential of search advertising on the Internet, these tools are the very solution to surviving in times of economic uncertainty.

-- Contributed by Gregory Pang

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Creating Reach with Online Internet Marketing

Monday, March 23, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)

I sit and tap at the keyboard, my fingers dancing along in a rhythm inspired by the Web site before me. Each day it's different, and more so, each Web site evokes a different rhythm. Sometimes I listen to music, sometimes a podcast, and I bob my head, to and fro, accordingly. But all of the time, whatever the Web site - whatever quality, or click size or type of package - I'm able to create a tangible presence for that particular Web site, or business.

I am a copywriter. I create voices for the business owner who sells medieval chess sets, silk sleepwear, and elk jerky all under the same roof... the Web site he's named *iloveeatingjerkyandfinalfantasyeventhat'scool.com* because he can. Or, for the business owner who has concocted a collection of somewhat creepy, but mostly unique, porcelain dolls with dresses fashioned from the hair of any one of fourteen cats roaming about their abode in rural Montana.

I, of course, am not the only one to create this voice. There are a variety of elements, all of which provide necessary, vital implementation along the way. I'm simply speaking of my part, the creative pieces that lend these small businesses a hand in creating the powerful reach afforded by targeted online Internet marketing that they might not have had otherwise.

In this world, I'm part of the solution for medieval chess set man to sell to his target market, Japan. In this world of marketing on the Internet, I'm creating an avenue for businesses, regardless of size, to compete. In this world, I'm helping to create a voice in an untapped market. With the appropriate keywords, titles, and online advertising text, I'm able to assist the online marketing efforts of cat-hair-garbed porcelain dolls. This makes me happy.

And so I tap, tap away, Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks* in my headphone, while I create, in part, a voice for the small businesses on the Web.

-- Contributed by Non Talbot Wels

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Local Businesses Across America - @Home Edition

Monday, March 9, 2009 by [WebVisible Team](#)



-- Contributed by Kevin Ryan,
WebVisible CMO

**Joe the Plumber is so 2008.
Meet Arsen the Tailor, Southern California's Best Kept Secret**

Arriving back in Southern California after living in the grueling winters of New York City was a breath of fresh (if not slightly smoggy) air. After taking some time to settle in—and because my Mom wanted closure on this story—I've decided to close this series by revealing a closely held secret.

Since the early days of my online advertising career, I've been moderately obsessed with making sure I have access to some level of sartorial excellence. I would never claim to be an expert, and I've loosened up a bit over the years, but I do enjoy making sure my clothes are of good quality and made to fit well.

I'm afraid this might read like a *"how to find a good tailor in Newport Beach"* or *"where's the best place to find custom clothes in Orange County"* piece, but stick with me; there's a bit more going on here.

To me, a good tailor fills the role a good bartender plays in the life of many others. In the early days of my career, I preferred having one or two good outfits in lieu of ten bad ones. I was pretty broke when I first started, and competition for looking good was stiff in my first agency job. I am not embarrassed to say I used to get dressed at the dry cleaner at least once a week back then.

My biological and genetic roadmap has dictated a need for custom clothes. About ten years ago, I moved to SoCal from New York City. Within days, I set out to find a good tailor. I found this tailor in the Yellow Pages (in ad unit we used to call a space ad). No graphics, just a small one-inch text box under "tailors." No Web site, no online listing, nothing.

More recently, after weeks of traveling across the country and enjoying the bounty of gourmet places like Waffle House and Cracker Barrel, it was time for another visit to my favorite tailor.

Arsen Gueleserian has been a practicing tailor since he was 12 years old. Arsen worked in France and Germany before he opened up shop in Orange County California in 1979. Why Arsen chose to move half way around the world is another story, but I can tell you he found working with Neiman Marcus less fulfilling than working for himself. So, in 1981, he opened his doors on Newport Boulevard in Costa Mesa, California.



On any day of the week, you'd find Arsen, his wife and his son, Shant, at his shop. In this particular instance, you'd also find a pile of my best custom suits.

Let me see if I can accurately describe the difficulty of finding a tailor in Newport Beach and the surrounding communities like Huntington Beach, Corona Del Mar, Laguna Beach and Irvine. I am a NY boy. To me, a tailor is a guy that when you walk through the door, there are some fine examples of sartorial excellence hanging about, and the tools of the trade should be very close by. He or she has a tape measure around his neck and his or her hands appear to be stained with tailor's chalk.

Some of the other tailors I've found in the aforementioned beach communities more closely resemble a Ferrari show room with cover models serving cappuccino and no actual tailors to be found. These are the kind of places where "going custom" means picking swatches with a hottie and sending a garment order form off for someone else to build and fit. Of course, that's one direction to go, but you'll pay triple-digit percentage markups for those garments.

Another option is hoping your dry cleaner can make some changes, but they usually send things to an outsourced cutter. In the unusual instance that he's any good, you'll have to pay his premium plus a little something for the dry cleaner. I'd rather have the guy with the tape measure and chalk. I don't care what the shop looks like; I'm looking at the clothes.

If you've been following my trip, you'll recall I've met a few artists along the way across America. I remembered Gil Hibben's words when he told me he still cuts all his own blades. Arsen cuts his own fabrics.

From the moment I walked through the door all those years ago, through last Saturday, I have been pleased with the work that has been done. I've had custom suits and shirts made and have witnessed perfect hems, the likes of which God herself would be proud to wear.

Arsen has a Web site now, and it's not a multi-million-dollar enriched digital experience. Like many small business sites, Arsen's site tells you where to find the shop, what he does, and a bit about him. While it may be basic by today's big spender standards, it maintains the essence of his creations.

The challenge for most small business is maintaining the core identity of their local brand in crossing over from tangible media onto the screen you see before you now. That challenge is balanced with the need to be found by the right people at the right time, which is the essence of marketing on the Internet.

When I searched for Arsen on major engines like Google, Yahoo! and MSN, I found local listings within local avenues such as maps with the search sites. Text links directed me to more popular sites for small business like Judy's Book, California Directory, Local.com, Yelp, YellowBot, CitySearch, Insider Pages, Topix and YellowBook.

As if the problems small companies face weren't great enough, when looking at local online marketing, small businesses have to navigate listing and advertising options on directory and social media sites that receive a great deal of natural search traffic

from search sites. They also have to contend with reviews on these sites. It took me about an hour to add a two-line review on each of the sites I mentioned above.



There are challenges and thankfully there are solutions. This is just one example of the need for small businesses to find experts to help with continued expansion into social platforms alongside search engine marketing, display, local and mobile advertising. I wonder where such businesses in need might find an expert [Internet advertising agency](#)?

Arsen's European Tailoring
1840 Newport Blvd.
Costa Mesa, CA 92627
(949) 646 3400

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How To Improve My Business In The New Year

Wednesday, December 31, 2008 by [WebVisible Team](#)

Guy Kawaski gives some sage advice and easy to implement tips for small businesses on the eve of 2009. Many of his items relate to core business operations - sales, support, customer experience, etc. When you're in the middle of these items and experience them yourself, you can better understand both what your customer's needs are, as well as how effectively you address those needs (and where improvements can be made).

The Internet has forced companies to continuously improve their capabilities and customer experiences. If one doesn't get what they expect, they can tell thousands of their friends about it, and it can stay online. When we have a great experience, we can do the same, with a site like Angie's List that has raving users and much of what they do is recommend things to each other. Be aware of what people are saying about you - good and bad.

Here are a few more thoughts to ponder for 2009:

- Reflect on what you do that provides unique, compelling experiences.
- Ask your customers why they prefer you, and what you could do better. In many cases, they will tell you, and appreciate being asked for input.
- Identify the people in your community who have a voice and can influence local consumers. Find ways to work together with these people.
- Use this economy to find interesting barter opportunities. What can you do/provide cheaply that can benefit others in your local market. If you are an expert on something, offer to host an educational seminar. Maybe a friend with a restaurant will host, on the chance that you can bring people to the restaurant. Get creative.
- If you are worrying about something, there is a good chance that others are as well. Find people to discuss and solve problems, and share solutions with others who can benefit.
- Experiment with new online sites and tools - many of them can drive inexpensive local online marketing opportunities, new connections and new insights. There are a lot of interesting people online - meet some new ones!

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Small Business Online Marketing Tips for 2009

Tuesday, December 30, 2008 by [WebVisible Team](#)

It's hard to believe that 2009 is here. As a New Year's gift, WebVisible has developed nine simple tips that can help you develop an effective online marketing strategy for 2009. Snippets below. For the full article, [check out the Orange County Register](#).

1. Do Some Sleuthing

When doing your own shopping, use Internet search engines to find local businesses. See what comes up and use your own shopping behavior as an indicator of what a consumer is likely to do when looking for a business like yours...

2. Look Beyond Online Directory Listings

Having a listing in the search engine's local maps section or in the online Yellow Pages is a good start, but it's not enough...

3. Understand the Relationship Between Online and Offline

Offline advertising, such as print, local cable TV, radio and direct mail, helps drive awareness and interest. But when in need, consumers use search engines to research and find solutions...

4. Pay Attention to Your Competition

You probably know your local competition well. Or do you? The Internet has broken down many geographic



competitive barriers, and there are probably many competitors outside of your area that you can learn from. What are they doing online?...

5. Make Your Web Site Compelling

First impressions are critical, especially on the Web. Use your Web site to not only display your qualifications, but also as a way to capture the attention of the visitor. Put yourself in your customers' shoes. Think solutions, testimonials, advice, discounts, offers – capture their attention and help them through the purchase cycle...

6. Optimize Your Web Site for Search Engines

Optimizing your Web site so that it can be found more easily on search engines can be a formidable and ongoing task. But there are some simple things you can do to help...

7. Understand Search Engine Marketing

Paid search engine marketing (SEM) is one of the best things business owners can do to gain an immediate Internet presence to promote their local businesses...

8. Marketing is an Investment – Demand ROI

Marketing should be an investment, not an expense. An investment means a return. Whether it's search marketing, a Yellow Pages ad or door hangers, demand to know how a return on your investment will be determined...

9. Let Experts Help

Do you know how to create the most effective search engine ads to attract the right customers for your business? As a small business owner, how much free time do you have? If you do have extra time, do you want to spend it learning the complexities of Internet marketing (that's what online advertising agencies are for!)...

-- Submitted by Jeff Werner

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Bringing Local Businesses to Online Advertising

Friday, December 19, 2008 by [WebVisible Team](#)

[Beverly Crandon reacts](#) to Microsoft's new survey results about small businesses and adoption of search engine marketing, but calling newspapers to act in providing the link for local advertisers to learn about the value and opportunity that Internet marketing offers.

I totally agree with Beverly, especially since we've worked with dozens of newspaper publishers of all sizes in the last few years. Local newspaper brands provide the entry point to start a conversation with local businesses about marketing and advertising. As print advertising has become less relevant in some local business owners' minds, the Internet has filled some of that void. Newspapers understand advertising and helping businesses build demand and brand for their companies. Print advertising is still effective for many businesses, and drives consumer behavior that in many cases involves the Internet. Bringing integrated marketing strategies that include search engine marketing is the evolving approach that the more forward-thinking newspapers are implementing, and we continue to partner with them to aid their efforts. Educating local businesses about local Internet advertising, providing them compelling and cost-effective solutions, and servicing and supporting them throughout their campaign will continue to be valued, and the kinds of services that local newspapers are well positioned to provide.

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Marketing in a Rough Economy

Thursday, October 30, 2008 by [WebVisible Team](#)

As a small business that doesn't enjoy the luxury of an unlimited marketing budget, you have some hard choices to make.

Are those coupon pack mailers working? Are you even tracking them? How about those door tags? Local radio? Newspaper display? All are great at getting the word out and "branding" your business – an essential activity. While I certainly wouldn't argue eliminating your pure awareness efforts, the value of a marketing program is in the MIX. And just like managing an investment profile, re-balancing your mix of advertising vehicles is critical as business gets more difficult to find.

Because search engine marketing is measurable it can validate your spend with real return-on-investment in the form of number of impressions (times people saw your ad) number of clicks your ads received, tangible visits to your web site, number of calls to your 800 number, how many times a potential customer printed driving directions to your business, etc.

And because it so measurable by its very nature, it is held to a higher level of scrutiny than just about any other form of advertising. The real question in tough economic times is – are you holding all your advertising to the same level of expectation? If not, why?

In this economy, there is no such thing as discretionary "experimental advertising." The point is – maybe not as much, but people are still purchasing. And they are still searching. What you need to look at is when they are looking, will you be found?

Remember, Internet marketing isn't just the territory of online advertising agencies. It's critical for small businesses to engage in local online marketing. And there are easy solutions available!

Reevaluating your mix, and shifting more of your branding/awareness spend to targeted online advertising

campaigns can help keep customers coming to your door during the slowdown... and putting your business in a very favorable position as economic conditions improve.

-- *Contributed by Jeff Werner*

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